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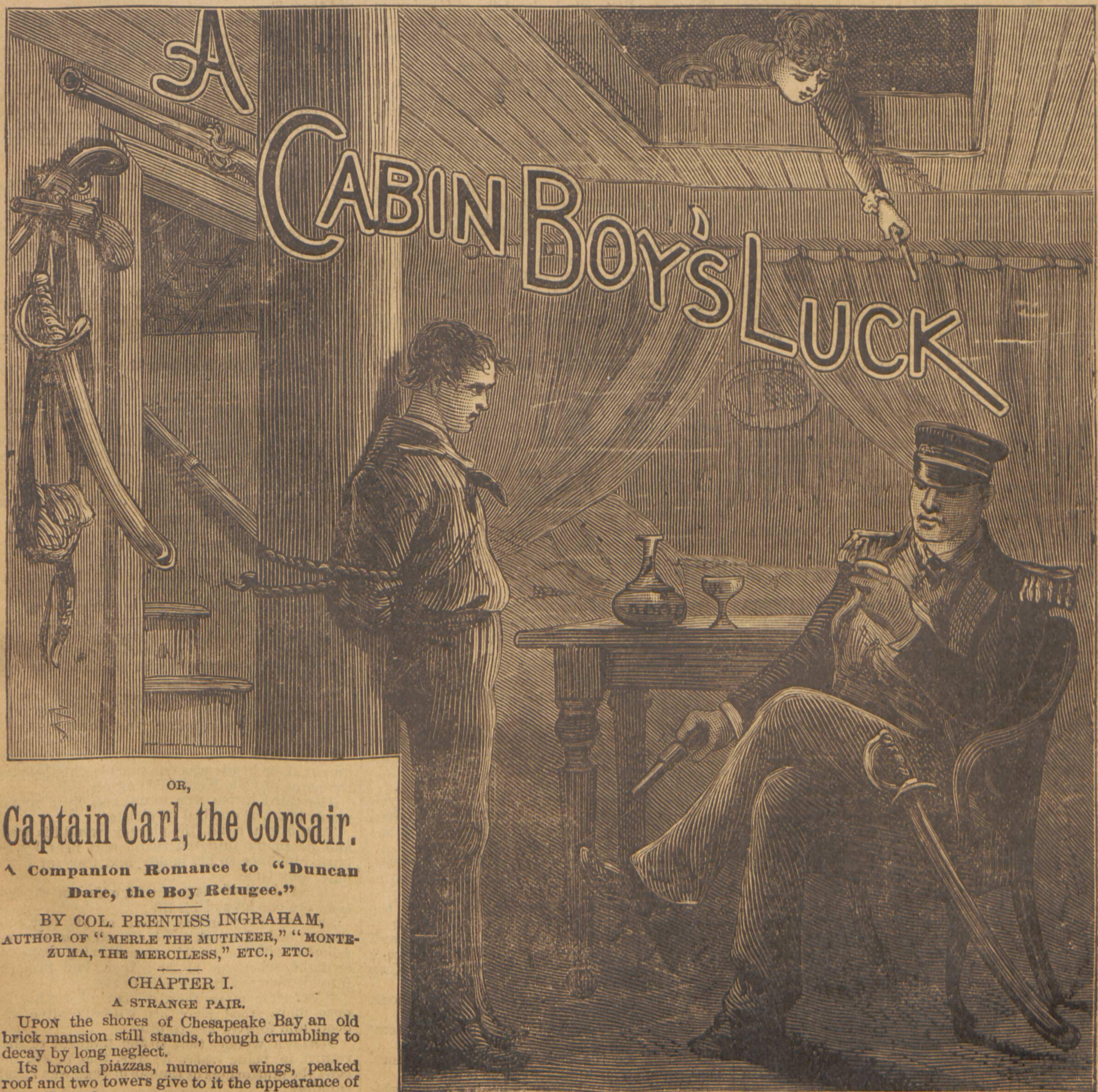
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OR, Captain Carl, the Corsair.

A Companion Romance to "Duncan
Dare, the Boy Refugee."

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM,
AUTHOR OF "MERLE THE MUTINEER," "MONTE-
ZUMA, THE MERCILESS," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

A STRANGE PAIR.

UPON the shores of Chesapeake Bay an old
brick mansion still stands, though crumbling to
decay by long neglect.

Its broad piazzas, numerous wings, peaked
roof and two towers give to it the appearance of
a small castle.

About it, casting it always in gloomy shadow,

"NEVER, SIR, WILL I DO WHAT YOU ASK!" WAS THE REPLY IN A FIRM VOICE.

A Cabin Boy's Luck.

is a park of gigantic trees, while the underbrush looks like a wilderness, and thousands of acres of weed-grown fields, once flourishing with grain, now look desolate and dreary in the extreme.

Time was when that old mansion, known as the Kenyon Castle, was the center of attraction in the wealthy neighborhood in which it stood, and when lighted up at night its stained windows caused it to be compared to some grand old cathedral in which night service was being held.

Its lord and master was then the gayest of the gay, and the son who inherited it was equally as fond of extending unbounded hospitality to kindred and friends.

The mansion was filled with elegant furniture, brought over from England, and the younger son of a noble, the builder of the "castle," as it was generally called, was proud of his ancestry and name.

Possessed of riches, he had come to America to travel, had fallen in love with a young girl, the daughter of a Maryland planter, and had built the castle for his home.

It is with the second generation that we have to deal, the second and the third, the son of the Englishman and the Maryland beauty and his children.

When "Lord Kenyon," as the neighbors called the Englishman, died, he left his estates to his son, Cyle Kenyon, and he, marrying a Baltimore belle, retained the old home, and settled down to a life of enjoyment.

The result of this union was two children, twins, and brother and sister.

Their mother was of a studious nature, and did all she could to advance the education of her two beautiful children, for they were indeed beautiful, while the father, a thorough sportsman, in his turn had them instructed in all outdoor amusements.

The result was that the brother and sister arrived at their sixteenth year, thoroughly versed in books and sports, and while they could converse intelligently upon literary topics with refined people of their set, they could also give points on the needs of horses and dogs, and at the same time were noted as crack shots, daring cross-country riders, and as good sailors as were on the coast, for the grounds of Castle Kenyon ran down to the Chesapeake's shores, and the beautiful bay was visible for miles from three points of observation on the piazzas.

Keeping his hunters, his kennel of hounds and his yachts and row-boats, as he did, the twins were able to learn as much out-doors in one way, as they could within doors from the extensive libraries.

Mrs. Kenyon herself being a fine horsewoman, and devoted to yachting, did not object to her children following their bent, while so close was the companionship of brother and sister, that neither would act without the other either in study or pleasure.

The result was that Kate Kenyon was as skilled in shooting, riding and sailing, as was her brother, King, while he also was an expert performer on the harp and guitar, and at the same time sung and danced well.

So alike were the two, that when in their sixteenth year, when they were wont to change attire with each other, even their parents were deceived as to their identity, for in size and bearing they resembled as much as in face, King's hands and feet being but a trifle larger than his sister's.

To those that spoke of King as effeminate, it was shown that Kate could put to blush many a masculine admirer with gun, rod, and on horseback, and as a sailor, and if her brother excelled her in anything it was in strength, for he possessed wonderful power in his slightly made, graceful form.

So they were a well-matched, strange pair, and people wondered what would be the end, when those two were old enough to love, other than brother and sister, and would separate their lives.

Happy, careless and free, they knew no care, loved their parents, clung to their home, and were favorites with all who knew them, from the lowest slave on the plantation to the richest planter neighbor.

But at last a cloud crossed the horizon of their young lives, for their beautiful mother was taken from them by death, and Castle Kenyon became shrouded in deepest gloom when the wife and mother was borne from the elegant home to a resting-place over on the hillside.

In his sorrow, Mr. Kenyon left the home with his children to travel awhile, and silence and desolation fell upon Castle Kenyon.

CHAPTER II.

MANNING THE LIFE-BOAT.

A YEAR and more passed away, ere planter Kenyon and his daughter returned to Castle Kenyon, for King had remained abroad to complete his studies.

It was a gloomy, storm-threatening morning when the carriage drove up to the mansion with the father and daughter.

Old servants had been notified, and had the home in readiness to welcome them, and a tempting dinner was soon served.

Yet all seemed dreary and cold to the two travelers, and Castle Kenyon was not the abode of the olden time.

Over in the little burying-ground lay the wife and mother, and far away across the sea, King, the son and brother, had been left, so that desolation seemed to reign supreme.

There was no sunshine without doors, and all was shadow within.

The dinner was hardly tasted, and then the father took his hat and walked out, and Kate knew well where his steps would lead him—to the grave over on the hillside.

Then Kate too left the house and strolled toward the cliff that overlooked the sea.

The heavens were dark with clouds and growing blacker rapidly, for a fearful storm was sweeping up the bay.

There was little wind about the cliff, or upon the bay near at hand, and a small schooner-of-war was trying to make some harborage before the coming of the storm.

"She cannot make Mallard Cove, and without a pilot she can never enter our harbor, so she'll have to face it," said Kate Kenyon, with the manner of one who had taken in the situation at a glance.

Below her was a small cove, a few acres in size, with an earthen arm jutting out and heavily wooded, which protected it from the sea.

This was the castle harbor, but that it was difficult of entrance and exit, a glance from the cliff showed, for there were numerous shoals here and there that rendered the channel narrow and crooked.

In the cove were several sailboats, and along the shore half a dozen skiffs and rowboats, all of which had been fitted up to be ready for use on the return of the master.

"If I had come out half an hour before, I could have reached the schooner, and then pilot ed her in when the storm struck her; but I could not do it now, though if brother King were only here we'd try it.

"Father is over at mother's grave, or I'd ask him, and—well, I'll have to give it up; but I'll run in and fit up for the storm, so as to see how the schooner stands it, for yonder tempest will be no child's play."

Rapidly she walked away, and soon after returned to the cliff enveloped in a long storm-coat, and wearing an oil-skin tarpaulin which would protect her from the rain.

The little schooner was now just off the entrance to the cove, about a mile distant, and barely moving along under the pressure of the light wind.

The storm was now awful in its threatening aspect, and rushing up the bay at terrific speed.

"Poor little schooner! you will have to fight hard for your life, for I never saw a worse storm," said Kate.

Then, an instant after, she impatiently added:

"Why does he not luff sharp, while he has a breeze at all, and throw his bows into the teeth of the gale?"

"What does her commander mean?"

As she asked herself this question, the bows of the schooner slowly came around, and were thrown to meet the storm face to face.

"Ah! he knows what he is about after all.

"Now to see the result, and may Heaven preserve the gallant little craft!" and she raised her beautiful eyes upward, showing that she meant her words indeed as a prayer.

"He has stripped her now to her storm-sails, and he can do no more— Ah! there the storm is upon her! Oh, God!"

The tempest had indeed come down upon the little schooner, and with such force, such irresistible fury, that the snapping of spars and cracking of timber mingled with the savage roar of wind and wave, and brought from Kate Kenyon's lips the appealing exclamation:

"She is dismasted and will be driven ashore, unless he gets out his anchors."

"But will they hold in the teeth of the tempest?"

"Ha! I see the crew letting go the anchors. That commander knows what he is about."

"Ah! the sea and spray hides her from sight, and I must seek shelter."

She bounded back from the cliff to the shelter of a rustic arbor, and hardly had she reached it when the wind came against the land with a force that seemed to fairly shake it.

The little arbor rocked to and fro, limbs were torn from trees and sent flying along like straws, while huge monarchs of the forest, which had battled with the tempests of half a century went down like wounded soldiers in battle before a mighty charge.

The heavens were of ebony hue, the clouds driving along with frightful velocity, and the sighing of the winds was appalling, while the roar of the waves, hurled back from the shore, seemed like thunder.

Crouching in the arbor, her hands clasped together, the words of Kate Kenyon showed that it was not for herself that she feared, for over and over again she said:

"Heaven spare that little schooner and her brave crew!"

Suddenly she started, for there came a sound that she knew but too well.

It was not the howling of the wind, the roar of the surf, nor the deep roll of thunder.

Again it was heard, and then came the words from her lips that told the story:

"It is an appeal for help; the schooner is coming ashore!

"But they shall not appeal in vain, for I will aid them!"

Out of the arbor she bounded like a rocket, along the cliff down a steep pathway, and panting with her rapid run, she drew up on the beach near a small boat-house built over the water, at the end of a small pier.

Seizing a rope she pulled quickly, and, with the first stroke of a large bell in the tower of the boat-house, out came from its shelter half a dozen negroes, dressed in white duck and tar-paulins.

"Oh, missy, is it you, miss," cried one.

"Yes, Jaspar, and I wish you to man the life-boat at once."

"Missy, we came down here when we seen de storm comin' up, and the schooner lyin' off yonder, thinkin' she might need help; but we hain't never seen no blow like this, and dasn't go out, missy."

"You must go, for I will go with you."

"Oh, no, missy, it would be death to go!"

"Into the life-boat I command you!"

"Quick! for while you hesitate, life is being lost."

"Hark! do you not hear that appealing cry for aid?"

"Into the boat, I say, and I go with you!"

Her commanding spirit broke down all opposition, and the brave negro crew sprung into the life-boat, seized their oars, and when she shot out from under the shelter of the boat-house, Kate Kenyon sat at the helm, her hands grasping the tiller in a way that showed she knew what was before her, and her confidence in her powers to face all dangers.

CHAPTER III.

TO THE RESCUE.

WHEN planter Cyle Kenyon left the castle, as the reader has seen, he wended his way through the park to the little hillside burying-ground.

It was a third of a mile from the mansion, beautifully situated upon a sloping hillside, and in the little walled-in space was every indication that the last resting-place of the dead was well cared for by loving hands.

There were monument trees there, flowers of many kinds, a rustic seat, and a spring of pure water wound its rippling way down the hill-side.

There were three graves there, two together, and at their heads was one marble slab, bearing the name of Cyle Kenyon's parents.

The third grave was unmarked by a monument, but was one bed of violets.

To this grave did the planter wend his way, and dropping into the rustic seat near by, he buried his face in his hands, and thus sat for a long, long time.

He had idolized his beautiful wife, and she had been the one love of his life.

She lay there in the grave at his feet, and though he had wandered far in other lands, and mingled with the world, the gathering shades of twilight, wherever he had been, had brought into his memory that lonely grave.

Now, after more than a year of roving, he once more stood near his wife—he alive; she dead, and forever lost to him.

Was it a wonder that in the moment of that return, in being where he was, that he did not heed the mutterings of the storm that was rising rapidly?

He seemed not to know that the heavens

were overcast, so deep in the shadow was his boat.

Swiftly the storm arose, and yet he sat there in his grief.

Then the fury of the tempest was upon the scene, and it recalled him to himself.

Instantly he looked about him, and sprung for shelter to a large oak near, whose spreading branches nearly covered the little burying-ground.

Even that gigantic oak swayed in the violence of the gale, and fearing that harm might befall some one at the mansion, Cyle Kenyon determined to face the storm and go thither.

The wind stirred the violets fiercely with its breath, but beneath all was still, and the shock of no storm reached the one beneath the mound.

With another glance at the grave the planter started for the mansion, when suddenly the deep boom of a heavy gun came to his ears.

"A ship in distress, and firing for a pilot, or aid; but not even my splendid crew of brave blacks would dare this tempest, though I should lead them."

"I must hasten."

Sc saying, he walked on as rapidly as he could in the face of the gale, and upon reaching the mansion found all secure, except a window shutter here and there, a panel of fence blown down, or a tree uprooted.

The old castle had quivered under the shock, but stood firm.

But a wailing sound came to his ears, and out of the mansion darted several negroes, wringing their hands and crying.

"In Heaven's name, what has happened?" the planter shouted.

"Oh, master! master! Missy Kate hab gone out in de life-boat!" cried an old negress, who had been the nurse of Mrs. Kenyon and her children.

"Gone in the life-boat!" and the planter staggered as though he had been struck a violent blow in the face.

"Yas, master, she made the life-boat crew go with her, sah, out to de skunner in de offin'."

"Then they have gone to their death!" groaned the man, and he seemed momentarily staggered beyond action.

But suddenly he bounded away, and he was followed by a score of negroes.

He knew it was useless to go to the shore, for there was no boat there that would live, where he expected the life-boat to go down.

So he went to the cliff, to rivet his eyes upon his child, to see her bravely face fate and conquer it, or to die, to go down to death in the black waters.

Reaching the cliff he stopped, his eyes blinded with tears, and at first he could not see.

About him gathered the negroes, men, women and children, as they came up, panting with their run, blinded by the fierce wind.

For a moment no one spoke a word, but eyes were rubbed fiercely, and the gaze of all was turned out upon the waters, which no one there had ever before seen so wild, and whitened with foam.

"The skunner!" suddenly cried a negro boy, and he pointed out upon the waters, as a flash of fire was seen, and a gun pealed forth.

"Yes, and she has had her topmasts blown out, her bowsprit is gone, and her bulwarks are stove in; but, my God! where is the life-boat?" groaned the planter.

"Dar she be!" yelled a negro urchin, whose bright eyes had sighted the life-boat, and a cry broke from every lip that ended in a perfect yell of joy, as the long black boat was descried just going out of the harbor channel and facing the fury of the gale, by dashing defiantly into its teeth.

Like a hound bounding over a fence, it would crouch low, and then leap over a mighty wave, but the six black oarsmen met her at every bound with their oars, and the brave girl at the tiller held her on her way.

"Ha! my child is not there! thank God! and Heaven bless those brave fellows for the fight with death they are making," cried the planter.

"Yes, master, she thar! that's Missy Kate in the storm-coat and tarpaulin, sah, for I seen her put 'em on," said a negress.

The planter groaned and again turned his eyes upon the life-boat.

"Alas! it is my child, and she it is who has made the crew face this tempest."

"My God! how that life-boat bounds!"

"Ah! there goes another gun for succor; they do not see the desperate chances a girl and six brave slaves are taking to save them from death."

"They sees her now, master," said a negro

man, who had been attentively regarding the schooner.

"Yes, they do! for hear that wild cheer."

"Brave fellows! succor is at hand, for God will not let yonder life-boat go down!"

"One of the anchor cables has parted, master, for there's none on the starboard bow, and there was a while since, and she seems to be sinking lower and lower," said the negro.

"Yes, she is doubtless leaking badly; but how many men are there on her, Bent?"

"I dunno, sah; I thinks about forty."

"The life-boat will not hold half of them, and if she sinks before she can return for a second load, or her cable parts those on board are doomed."

"Yas, sah, but they is riggin' a new bowsprit, sah, and gettin' ready to set what sail she'll stand."

"You are right, Bent, and that officer knows his business, for he feels, if the schooner can stand sail enough to steer her, she can run into the cove under a pilot."

"But little he knows that the one in that boat who can pilot him in is a young girl, a mere child."

"Child in years, master, but not in sense, sah, for Missy Kate got more wisdom about boats than most dese Chesapeake sailors has," said the old nurse, proudly.

"True, Cilla, but then Miss Kate has not touched a helm for over a year."

"Makes no dif'rnce, master, Missy Kate knows just what she are about, and ef de Lord hab selected her ter save yonder skunner, she's gwine ter do it sure, sah."

"God bless you, Cilla, for your cheering words," fervently said the planter, and he riveted his gaze once more upon the life-boat.

It was evident that the life-boat had all they could do, in those mad waters, to keep the boat's head to the tempest, and at times it seemed to be driven backward, instead of making progress.

But the little hands grasping the tiller never swerved in the slightest mistake, and the white, brave face looking out from under the tarpaulin wore a look of resolution and pluck that cheered the black faces looking into her own for encouragement.

Had Kate Kenyon shown a loss of nerve, or made a mistake, the doom of the life-boat would follow quickly.

Not a word was spoken, and only duty seemed to be the controlling feeling, in the hearts of the seven who were bravely facing death to go to the rescue of fellow-beings.

CHAPTER IV.

BY A WOMAN'S HAND.

"JASPAR, one of their anchor-cables has parted, and if the other parts, she is doomed; so pull for your lives!"

It was the first word that Kate had uttered since leaving the boat-house, and she now saw that the schooner's danger was doubly increased.

The crew, with their backs to the schooner, could not see or know how far she was off; but they nerved themselves to harder work, and relied upon their girl captain, not upon themselves.

"That officer who commands is a true sailor, Jaspar, for he is rigging another bowsprit in spite of the gale, and reefing the mainsail down to a mere ribbon, to try and get sail on her should the other cable part; but she's sinking lower and lower, it seems to me."

"Leaking badly, missy, I reckons," answered Jaspar.

"Doubtless— Ah! they see us at last. Hark to that cheer!"

The wild cheering of the schooner's crew seemed to nerve the life-boat oarsmen to harder work, and joy shone in their black faces as they felt how their courage was appreciated by those whom they went to rescue.

Over waves, down into the trough of the sea, and cutting through foaming crests, the life-boat sped, straight for the schooner.

Nearer and nearer she drew, and louder and louder grew the cries of the waiting crew.

The sea was lashed into fury, the wind still rushed with relentless force over the waters, and the aspect of the heavens was appalling; but on sped the life-boat, and praying for her coming were the schooner's crew.

The appealing cry for help from the guns' brazen throats had ceased, the bowsprit had been rigged, and all on board was ready for the coming of the life-boat; but the schooner was leaking badly, the pumps would not work, and it was a struggle between life and death for mastery, with the odds in the favor of death.

Nearer and nearer drew the life-boat, the girl's hand holding her unerringly upon her course, though the waves dashed over her, and at times tossed her about as though she would be thrown keel upward.

But the boat was well built and perfectly seaworthy, and unless swamped or thrown over, Kate Kenyon had no fear of the result.

She knew that her skill alone could prevent such a mishap, and that all depended upon her nerve.

She had not been lately accustomed to such scenes, such as she then found herself in, but yet she did not falter in the least degree, and her perilous course was watched with the greatest anxiety by her father and the negroes upon the cliff, and with terrible hope and suspense by those on the schooner.

Nearer and nearer she drew to the vessel, which now seemed to labor heavily, and soon a wild cheer broke from the crew, as the life-boat ran up under the stern of the schooner, and ropes were thrown and caught.

Bravos filled the air for a moment, and then the schooner's commander cried.

"Nobly done, lads! nobly done! but is there a pilot among you, for I believe the schooner can be run in to quiet water, beached and saved, for she is leaking badly."

"I will pilot her in, sir, and you can send the men not needed on board back in the life-boat," and aided by Jaspar, while she gave her hand to the young captain to aid her, Kate Kenyon sprung upon the schooner's deck.

"A woman!" broke in surprised tones from the lips of the officer, and it was chorused by the men.

"Yes, sir, if your vessel is saved, it will be by a woman's hand; but act quickly, for you have no time to lose, from the way the schooner appears to be settling," and Kate sprung to the wheel.

A half-score of men then hastily got into the life-boat, Jaspar taking the tiller, while some of the schooner's crew aided at the oars.

"Cut loose!" came the order, and as the life-boat was borne away before the gale, there came a loud snap forward, and the schooner crouched low under the shock.

"The other cable has parted! now set what sail you can!" cried Kate, and the men sprung to obey.

A moment the schooner rolled fearfully in the trough of the sea, but the little sail that was soon set steadied her, her bows swung round, and away she flew before the gale with terrible speed.

By the life-boat she drove, Kate Kenyon at the wheel, and the young captain aiding her.

To turn into the channel leading into the cove harbor, Kate saw that she must jibe the main-sail to starboard, for she dared not lose time in going about in that wild sea, and with the schooner sinking as she was.

It was risky indeed, for if the shock of jibing carried away the mast, or broke the boom, the schooner must go upon the shoals and be knocked to pieces.

She explained the situation hastily to the captain, and then they nerved themselves to execute it.

At last the perilous moment came, the boom swung over to starboard with a force that was terrific, but, other than the shock the mast, boom and canvas held firm, and a cheer from the crew greeted the successful deed.

On through the dangerous channel sped the schooner, the sea tumbling about her in wildest confusion, and then into the cove she darted, running in close under the lee of the heavily wooded point of land.

"I had better beach her in yonder creek, for she will not sink deep there, and at low tide you can get at the leak," said Kate, pointing to a small brook that flowed into the cove.

"As you please, lady, for you have shown yourself a captain," said the young officer, trying to get a better look at the face that was almost hidden by the tarpaulin, for Kate had tied the flaps down on each side with a silk sash she had taken from about her waist.

Into the mouth of the brook the schooner glided, and the anchor was let fall as soon as the keel touched bottom.

At the same moment a tall form bounded over the bulwarks, and clasping the maiden in arms, Cyle Kenyon, for it was he, cried in a voice that quivered:

"My brave, my beautiful girl!

"You have done a noble act this day; but oh! how could you be so rash?"

"Father, I felt that I could save the schooner, so took the risk," she said modestly.

"And save her you did, lady, and we owe our

lives, our vessel's safety to the hand of a woman," and the young captain bowed low, his hat in his hand.

The rough storm coat that Kate had on, enveloping her to the heels, the man's tarpaulin, hiding her face, had caused him to believe her to be a fisherman's daughter, some daring young maiden whose life was passed upon the water.

But the appearance of the refined and handsome gentleman who called her his daughter, showed that he was mistaken.

Then too he observed what had escaped his attention before, a small, well-shaped boot beneath the storm-coat, and hands that were tiny, shapely, and covered with jewels.

"May I present myself as Carl Casandra, Captain of Revenue, under the Government, and commanding the schooner-of-war Vandal?" and Captain Casandra again bowed low.

Kate put out her hand in her frank way, and answered:

"I am glad to meet you, Captain Casandra, and to present to you my father, Mr. Cyle Kenyon, a planter."

The two men grasped hands, and the planter said: "Captain Casandra, I too am glad to meet you, and to feel that I owe the pleasure to the courage of my daughter.

"My home is yonder, sir, Castle Kenyon we call it, and I would like to claim you, and your officers, during your stay in my little harbor, for your vessel will need repairs that cannot be done in a day."

Gladly did Carl Casandra accept the invitation to become the guest of the planter, and promising to come up to the mansion, with a couple of his officers, as soon as they had seen to the welfare of their vessel, he saw the father and daughter depart in the life-boat, which now arrived in safety with her party.

That evening, when the young officer beheld Kate Kenyon come into the parlor, where he sat chatting with the planter and his brother officers, while awaiting for supper, her radiant beauty completely dazzled him, and before he went to sleep that night he registered a vow that Kate Kenyon should one day be his wife.

Whether the vow was kept or not, the sequel will show.

CHAPTER V.

HOPE.

CAPTAIN CASANDRA was a man of striking appearance, for he had dignity of mien, added to a courtly manner, was tall, well-formed, and his face was one to command attention at a glance.

He was young for the position he held, of captain in the Revenue Service, but he had worked his way up by gallant acts, and his daring and good service caused some of his wild escapades to be overlooked by Government officials, when under different circumstances they would not have been tolerated.

The result was that Captain Casandra, at the age of twenty-eight, found himself in command of a fine schooner, and he was returning from a long and successful cruise against smugglers, when overtaken by the storm in Chesapeake Bay.

His schooner sadly needed refitting and overhauling, and she would have gone in for repairs long before, only she could not be spared, so the result was that she leaked badly, and would have gone to the bottom but for the pluck of Kate Kenyon.

Captain Casandra and each one of his crew fully realized this, and where the latter looked with devoted admiration and gratitude upon the young girl, the gallant commander fell over head and heels in love with her.

He did not hurry his workmen in patching up the schooner, so that days passed ere he set sail from the little harbor of Castle Kenyon.

He had sent a junior officer on to make his report to Government, and to have all in readiness for his vessel to go upon the stocks, and so he was content.

The days he remained in Castle Kenyon haven he passed with the beautiful Kate.

They rode together along the highways, strolled together around the forests, rowed or sailed upon the bay, and in fact it seemed as though the heart of the young girl had been won by the man whose life she had saved.

At last the parting day came, and Kate had taken Captain Casandra over to see her mother's grave.

It was near the sunset hour, and the captain was to sail just after nightfall, for he had been taught well the channel by the fair pilot.

"You say that I may come to see you again?" he asked in a low tone, as the two sat together upon the rustic seat by the violet-covered grave.

"Yes, I will be glad to see you, as I know father also will be," was the response.

"Perhaps, Miss Kenyon, if we had met under different circumstances, I would not have said for a long time what now I wish to say.

"You saved my life, you saved my crew and vessel, and you won my greatest gratitude and admiration.

"In the week that we have been together, you have grown into my heart never to be effaced therefrom, and I can only say I will come again gladly, to see you, if I feel that I am not coming merely to be led into deep sorrow by unrequited love.

"Bid me hope; it is all I ask, and I will come.

"Can I come under those circumstances, with such a welcome word from you?"

He did not touch her hand, but sat apart, speaking earnestly.

"Come!" she said, in a low voice, and at the same moment she arose to go to the mansion.

"Miss Kenyon, one moment, please."

She paused, and still standing where he was when he called to her, he said:

"I would say to you that my life has not been all that it should be, for I lived fast and recklessly; but I had ambition only to urge me on.

"Now, with love to protect me, and ambition to urge me forward, my life shall be a changed one, and I will prove myself worthy of your confidence, and, may I say, love?"

She held out her hand with a smile, and he grasped it warmly.

Then they started for the mansion, and two hours after the schooner set sail.

It was a beautiful moonlight night, and planter Kenyon and Kate sailed in the schooner out to sea, the maiden, at the request of Carl Casandra, taking the wheel, while the little yacht with her negro crew followed in the vessel's wake.

A league at sea the schooner hove to, farewells were said, and the yacht put back to the haven, while the Vandal went on her way.

"How do you like Captain Casandra, Kate?" asked the planter, as the two were walking up the path to the mansion after landing from the yacht.

"Father, I may as well be frank and tell you that I love him."

"Ah, child! I feared as much."

"Feared it, sir?"

"Yes, for Carl Casandra does not impress me as being sincere."

"Sincere, father?"

"Yes, Kate, for I studied him well, when I saw that you were interested in him, and he in you."

"He is wonderfully fascinating in manner, handsome, sings well, rides like a Centaur, and better still, is a perfect seaman and without fear.

"He has worked his way up well, and in war times would make a great name; but he is stern as adamant with his men, almost cruel, and holds no friendship with his officers, while I am sure that he is dissipated."

"He told me he had lived a fast life, father, but said he would change his career if I bade him hope some day to gain my love."

"I hope he may; but your answer was—"

"I bade him come back to see me."

"Well, Kate, your happiness is what I seek, and I pray he may prove worthy the wearing of a gem so priceless."

"He loves you, that I saw, and I hope it may change him from what I feel now that he is."

"Now, let us drop this subject, and await the tide of events, to see what will come of it all," and the planter kissed his daughter good-night, and sought his own room; but there was a shadow upon his heart which he did not like to have there, for it was called up by a dread of unhappiness to his loved daughter.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GAMBLER CAPTAIN.

UPON his arrival in port, Captain Carl Casandra got his schooner laid up for repairs, and then sought rooms he was afterward to occupy, when he remained a few weeks in the harbor.

The image of Kate Kenyon was constantly in his mind, and, as soon as he had gone to Washington to make his report in person, and then attend to some important business matters, he meant to return to Castle Kenyon for a couple of weeks.

To Washington he went then, and received the thanks of his superiors for his valuable services, after which he returned to Baltimore, and settled himself down in his rooms for a few days.

That night, while his successful capture of a

band of smugglers upon the Virginia coast, was the talk upon every lip, he wended his way to a large gambling-saloon, and, recognized by the doorkeeper, entered.

It was a gorgeous place, and a large number of gamblers were there, and by many he was cordially greeted.

Straight to the roulette-table he went, nodded to the man in charge, and began to bet heavily.

For awhile, as is so often the case, he won largely, and then the tide turned, and he risked all of his winnings upon one bet.

He lost, and at once began to wager high.

Bet after bet was lost, and the interest of all became centered in the playing of the young captain.

Calm, pale, yet plucky, he still bet against fate, and still lost heavily.

At last he paused and said:

"Benedict, you have won from me to-night just ten thousand dollars of my money."

"Will you cash my I. O. U. for an equal sum?"

"We will stake you for that sum, Captain Casandra, if you wish to play," was the answer.

"I do; here is the I. O. U., so give me a thousand to begin with."

The note was written, the money handed over, and once more did the young sea-captain begin to win.

But once more luck changed, and in an hour's time he had not a dollar.

"Give me five thousand more, Benedict," he said calmly.

The money was given to him, upon the same terms as before, and this too was lost.

With a face that was very pale Carl Casandra turned from the table, and walked out into the street.

For awhile he seemed to stroll listlessly about, as though not knowing or caring whither he went.

Then he stopped, hesitated a moment, and next went hurrying along in the direction of the harbor.

At last he halted at a brick house, old and dilapidated, and standing slightly apart from others.

A yard ran down to the water's edge, but it was rank with weeds.

A single light was visible, and knocking at the door, the window above was raised and a voice said:

"Well, who are you, and what do you want?"

"Ho, Marks, it is the Vandal, so let me in."

"Ah! Captain Casandra! I will be down in a minute," and soon after the door was thrown open.

"Come in, captain," said a tall man, with long black beard, who had opened the door.

The sailor entered, and the man barred the door, after which he took up his lantern and led the way up a pair of rickety stairs.

Into a large room he turned, and it was brilliantly lighted, comfortable, and with drawn curtains over the windows.

A large table was near the fire-place, and upon it were piles of gold, bank notes and papers, which the man had evidently been looking over when he heard Captain Casandra's knock.

"Be seated, captain," and Marks motioned to an easy-chair near the table, and stepping to a sideboard brought out a decanter of brandy and glasses.

He was a man of powerful build, with long black hair and beard, and his face, what features were visible, indicated cunning, and devilishness to a wonderful degree.

"Well, Marks, you hold my paper, due soon, and I wish to renew it," said the captain, bluntly.

"It will be due day after to-morrow, captain, and the sum total, with interest, is just twelve thousand five hundred dollars."

"Twenty-five hundred dollars being interest," sneered the captain.

"Yes, sir, for I have renewed for you five separate three months, making fifteen months you have had the ten thousand, on interest of five hundred per term."

"Well, you must renew it, and give me some money."

"I cannot, sir."

"Cannot what?"

"Do either."

"But you must!"

"I must not, Captain Casandra."

"Man, I lost at the gaming-table to-night ten thousand dollars given me by another, a planter, to deposit for him in bank."

"I hoped to be in luck, but was not, and so I gave my due-bill for ten thousand, and then for five thousand, and all went, so I owe just twenty-

ty-five thousand, in addition to other debts here, that are pressing me, and I have not a thousand dollars to my name."

"This is not my fault, sir."

"It is, when you charge such a thieving interest, Marks."

"You have not yet paid the interest, captain."

"But I will do anything if you will help me out of this scrape."

"Anything?"

"Well, anything within reason."

"You have just made a successful capture of smugglers, captain?"

"True."

"And your prize-money therefrom will be, say, now much?"

"Perhaps twenty thousand—perhaps less, certainly not more."

"And the prize and goods?"

"Are on their way here, under a prize crew."

"When do you expect them?"

"The smuggler vessels were disabled, so had to repair, and I left a lieutenant, middy, and twenty men to bring them into port as soon as possible, while I took the prisoners to Norfolk in my schooner."

"The two prize craft should be in by the end of this week."

"How much are they worth?"

"A hundred thousand, perhaps, for there are some very valuable goods."

"And you get one-fifth of this?"

"Yes; my officers another fifth, and crew two-fifths, and Government the balance."

"Captain Casandra, do you think that you have always acted as an officer and a gentleman?" came the cool query.

"Marks! do you dare to insult me?" and the young sailor dropped his hand upon his sword-hilt.

"No, but I have a motive for asking."

"Your motive then?"

"To see what you are willing to do to extricate yourself from this scrape, which your passion for gambling has gotten you into, and which looks very black for you, captain, in that you gambled away the money given you to deposit by planter Cyle Kenyon."

CHAPTER VII.

THE TEMPTATION.

AT the words of the man Marks, Carl Casandra sprung to his feet, his eyes flashing, and his face pallid.

"Who told you that Cyle Kenyon gave me that money to deposit, for I did not mention his name?" he hissed.

"Be calm, sir, and learn that one who leads the life that I do, must keep his eyes open, and mine have been open some time."

"It is no use for you to get into a rage, for it will do you no good."

"I will help you out of your trouble, if you do as I wish, for I know that you hope to marry Miss Kenyon, who is a very rich heiress, and beautiful girl; but you must have money to back you, for people think you are rich, and you so led her father to believe."

"In Heaven's name where did you get all of your information, Marks?"

"It matters not, only I know whereof I speak, and, as I said, I desire to help you."

"I know that you have gambled heavily, and I am aware of certain questionable actions on your part to raise money, while you have hushed up the fact that you had a sailor whipped to death, on one cruise, and shot to death yourself, another, on your last cruise, for very slight offenses."

"You are a bad man at heart, Captain Casandra; but I am a bad man myself, and hence a fellow feeling makes me wondrous kind toward you, and I am going to help you out of your scrape, if you will let me."

Carl Casandra gazed at the man before him in perfect dismay.

How he had discovered what had occurred on board of his vessel he could not tell, and more, how he should have known of his love for Kate Kenyon, and getting the money from Cyle Kenyon to deposit.

He was, however, in a desperate place, for he owed large sums in Baltimore, and knew that they must be settled at once, not to speak of the money he had just lost at the gaming-table.

Did he hope to marry Kate Kenyon, he must clear up his affairs, and thus stand out clean before the world, no matter what was behind the curtain that he would wish to hide from view.

So he turned to the strange man before him and said:

"Marks, you seem allied to Satan, to get the

information you do; but I am in a desperate fix, as you can see, and you must help me out."

"I have my own terms, sir."

"Well?"

"Let us see what you owe."

"I can give you a guess at it."

"I can give you the exact figures," was the cool reply, and Marks took up a blank-book and continued:

"At the Monument Tavern you owe twelve hundred dollars, and then to four different friends, whose names you know, one thousand each, gambling debts.

"You have overdrawn from the paymaster three thousand, and you did not pay some Government bills with money given you, and there are twenty-seven hundred more."

"Then one thousand will square up a host of little accounts, and added to the above, we have the twenty-five thousand you lost to-night, and the twelve thousand five hundred you owe me."

"In all, Captain Carl Cassandra, you need just forty-nine thousand four hundred to save your supposed honor, and square you financially."

"Great God!"

"Yes, you are in a desperate position, sir; but I see a way out of it."

"Well, do not keep me in suspense."

"Where do you think you could find the prize you sent here?"

"On the way up the bay."

"It is worth a hundred thousand dollars?"

"If not more."

"How many in crew?"

"Two officers and twenty men on the two vessels."

"Schooners?"

"One small schooner, the other a sloop."

"They will keep together?"

"I so ordered, and to keep close in-shore, as the vessels were not in the best of condition."

"Captain Casandra!"

"What?"

"I will furnish you a crew and a craft to go down the bay and capture those two vessels."

"In the devil's name what do you mean?"

"I mean that you must capture those vessels and then turn them over to a man I will send as next in command to you."

"When you show me his receipt that you have done so, I will cancel all of your debts, as you know them, and give you just twenty thousand dollars in cash for yourself."

"Do you mean to say that I am to go and take my own prize?"

"Yes."

"And turn it over to you?"

"Yes."

"And you are to give me, say, equal to seventy thousand dollars?"

"Yes. I am to pay your debts and give you twenty thousand, for, if I trust you to pay them, you will not do it, and the result will be that you get into another snarl and fail to marry the fair lady you love."

"Marks, you are a scoundrel."

"My dear Casandra, did I ever profess to be anything else?"

"No; but you are far worse than I believed you."

"And you are just what I knew you to be."

"Come, there is no time to lose, so make up your mind quick, as the vessels must be taken ere they reach port, and more, you have got to pay your bills."

"Give out that you have gone to Washington for a few days, and return here just before dawn and your vessel and crew will be ready for you, while I'll have a disguise for you that no one would ever recognize you in."

"Come, ruin stares you in the face, and you can escape but one way."

"Will you take that one way?"

Carl Casandra sprung to his feet and paced to and fro in silence.

His brow writhed under his mental suffering, and he bit his lips viciously.

"I have no time to lose, sir, for I must order my vessel and crew for your work."

"I do not know what to say."

"Ah! you hesitate, so I decide for you."

"Come, I will put my gold away and go out with you, as I have to get all ready."

"Here, put this thousand dollars in your pocket, for you may need it, and return here just as soon as you can."

The man did not seem to take a refusal into consideration, and hastily putting away his money and papers, he took the arm of the young sailor and led the way from the room.

He set the lantern down in the hall to light his way back, and then the two went out and Marks locked the door after them.

At the corner they paused. Carl Casandra had not spoken since they had left the room.

Now he said:

"Marks, you have tempted me, and I have fallen."

"It is now sink or swim with me, with the tide against me."

"I will be back at your house within the hour, and then have your disguise ready, for I must not be known in this matter."

"Certainly not, for it would spoil all our little plans in the future should we need a little money."

"I shall expect you," and Marks walked rapidly away in the direction of a swinging lamp on which was painted:

"SAILORS' PARADISE."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE COMPACT KEPT.

SEVERAL days after the strange scene related, between the young captain of revenue and the man Marks, Kate Kenyon was standing upon the cliff, from whence her father and the negroes had viewed her gallant act in going out to the schooner-of-war, when her attention was attracted to two small vessels standing slowly up the coast, for the wind was light.

One was a schooner of fifty tons, the other a sloop of thirty, and they sailed near together.

They were trim-looking craft, yet sailed as though deeply freighted, for they were not making as much out of the six-knot breeze as their appearance indicated they should.

From gazing at these two vessels her eyes turned up the bay, and they lighted upon a small black schooner of thirty tons.

She had the appearance of a Chesapeake pilot-boat, and but half a dozen men were visible upon her decks.

She carried, as did the other two vessels, the United States flag at her peak, and sailed merrily along, making far better speed than did the other craft out of the same wind.

It was nearly sunset, and the shadow of the cliff already shaded the little harbor and shore, and Kate noticed that the single vessel seemed desirous of speaking with the other two, as she held on her way so as to cross their bows, when she could readily have gone far from them and made better time on her way.

The sun soon set, twilight deepened into night, and the three vessels were not far apart.

Suddenly, out of the darkness a light flashed, and a small gun was fired from the little schooner across the bows of the other two.

What could it mean? Attentively watching the three craft, Kate had not thought of returning to the house when darkness came on, and now she wished to watch what could be the meaning of the little schooner's action.

The large schooner and the sloop now seemed to be alarmed, for they spread extra sail and went flying away from their suspicious companion.

But quickly the little schooner started in pursuit, and in a very short while overhauled the sloop, running alongside of her.

Then, to the ears of the maiden came the clash of steel and the flashes of firearms were visible.

The shot had brought the planter to the cliff, and Kate hastily told him what she had seen while she added:

"Father, from the description given by Captain Casandra of his two smuggler prizes, I am confident they were his vessels, while on their decks were sailors in uniform; but what was the other craft?"

"Perhaps a smuggler attempting a rescue, my child; but see! the schooner has sailed on past the sloop, which follows in her wake, as though she had been captured."

"Now to see if she catches the large schooner."

"She will readily do it, sir, for see how she gains. That little schooner is very fast, father."

"She is indeed; but there comes the moon and we will see all that occurs."

For half an hour the father and daughter stood watching the chase.

The large schooner tried several different courses, in the endeavor to find some point of sailing faster than her pursuer, but each time she saw that it was useless.

Rapidly the pursuer gained on her, and before she had gone a league ran alongside, as she had the sloop.

A gain followed flashes and rattle of firearms, and then all was still once more.

Soon after the three vessels turned their prows toward port, and went along briskly under an increasing breeze.

JNA

What was the meaning of the strange proceeding neither father or daughter could guess; but a week after the Norfolk packet hove to off the Castle Kenyon cove, and a boat put off for the shore.

As it touched the beach a tall form sprung out, and a seaman followed with some baggage.

Then the boat returned to the packet, and Jasper, who had seen the landing approached the spot where the one who had been left by the boat awaited him.

"Ho, Jasper, I am glad to see you.

"Here, shoulder my traps if you wish to see the color of a gold piece.

"But how are all at the castle?"

"Well, captain, all well, sah, and kinder expecting you, Missy Kate war."

"Ah! it will be no surprise, then, to come as I do," and Carl Casandra walked toward the mansion, followed by Jasper.

At the door he was met by both the planter and his daughter, and a warm welcome was extended to him.

And then from his lips they heard how, taking advantage of the Vandal being laid up for repairs, some daring pirates had boarded and captured the two prize vessels he had taken from the smugglers, with all their booty on board.

"It is rather a hard blow at me just now, as I have met with some other losses of late; but let me give you your certificate of deposit, Mr. Kenyon, for the ten thousand—there!"

He handed over a paper, and the planter glanced at it.

"This is for twenty thousand, Captain Casandra, and it was ten thousand dollars that I gave you."

"Ah! Yes, I made a mistake in the certificates, for that one is in my name, as you see, and here is yours," and the right one was handed over by the cunning officer, who, as though without intention, had allowed Kate and her father to see that he had twenty thousand dollars to his credit.

How he got that money the reader is aware, for he it was who successfully captured his two prizes when they were near port, and Marks had promptly carried out his contract with him, so that Carl Casandra was a free man, as far as his debts were concerned; but then he had placed a weight upon his conscience not easily thrown off.

CHAPTER IX.

DESPAIR.

AFTER a visit of a couple of weeks, Carl Casandra left Castle Kenyon, with Kate his promised bride.

The planter had tried to banish his suspicions against the young officer, for Carl Casandra certainly appeared to be all that a young girl could wish for, a devoted and honorable husband, and he had given his consent to their engagement, with the promise that Kate should become his wife within a few months.

Back to the city went the gambler captain, assured of his prize, and in his joy he determined to forget his promises made of reform, and once more try his luck at cards.

He entered the same gambling saloon, a few nights after his return, and stood at the gaming table until he saw his twenty thousand dollars depart from him, and only left when he had given his I. O. U. for thirty thousand more.

Almost desperate, he went to Marks on the following night.

"Marks, you must help me out!" he said savagely.

"I cannot."

"You shall!"

"Don't get disagreeable, Casandra, for I tell you frankly I do not see how I can help you."

"You must find some way."

"I do not know any, and I only made, after the charter of vessel and pay of crew were counted, with loss on some goods damaged, about five thousand on that prize transaction."

"That was enough."

"You got the lion's share."

"I deserved it, for I gave up my honor to do as I did."

"You sold your honor cheap, Captain Casandra; but that is not the case in point."

"I wish money, I tell you," sullenly said Casandra.

"I can tell you how you can get it."

"How?"

"When will your schooner be ready for sea?"

"To-morrow."

"Well, go in her and capture a prize, and put a prize crew on board, which I will ship for you."

"Let them bring her into port to me."

"But the officers in charge?"

"Let them be put ashore at some point, and my man take charge."

"They must not be harmed, Marks, for I did not like having to take life before."

"They resisted you like fools, so you could not help it, but now go to bed as soon as you can."

"I cannot, and owe this money."

"I will pay that for you."

"Ah!"

"On conditions?"

"Well?"

"That you give me your note, dated one month after you marry Miss Kenyon, for the amount."

"I'll do it."

"Then I'll write the note, and also a draft to your order, which you can indorse and I will send it to the gambling saloon for you."

"I will take it."

"You will not, for it is my money."

"Well, give me a thousand to try me luck to-morrow night, and I will not go beyond it if I lose."

"I'll do it," and the papers were drawn up and duly signed.

The next night found Carl Casandra again in the gambling saloon, and he not only lost the thousand dollars, but far more, for the keeper had said to him:

"Your credit is gilt edge, captain, for all you need, for I received your draft this morning for the amount due."

"I sail to-morrow, Benedict, and if I lose more, you will have to await my return to port."

"All right, sir, draw for what you need," was the answer, and, with the temptation Carl Casandra obeyed, and soon owed twenty thousand dollars.

He was about to ask another loan, when a familiar voice said:

"Come, Captain Casandra, come with me, for this will not do."

"Planter Kenyon!" gasped Carl Casandra.

"Yes; but you seem nervous, and half ill, so come with me away from here."

"I called at your rooms, and found you gone, so at last traced you here, but am sorry I did not arrive sooner."

"We came up to town on a shopping excursion and are at the Monument Tavern."

"Miss Kenyon is with you?" gasped the sailor.

"Oh, yes, so breakfast with us in the morning and meet her; but let me now say, Casandra, that I am surprised to find you such a reckless gambler."

"I was wrong, sir, very wrong; but I was tempted to play, yielded, and have a severe lesson in my losses."

"I beg of you not to speak to Miss Kenyon of my wrong-doing, and I promise you I'll not again err."

The kind-hearted planter grasped the hand of the young officer and the two parted for the night.

Going on board his vessel Carl Casandra gave orders that he would not sail for a couple of days, and when the schooner did sail, beautiful in her new paint and rig, the planter and his daughter went as passengers down to their home on the Chesapeake.

The schooner lay all night in the little harbor, and then sailed on her mission.

It was two months before she returned, and then Carl Casandra was almost desperate.

He went to his rooms and found there awaiting him a number of letters.

The first one bore an official stamp, and breaking the seal his brow grew black as he saw that he was suspended from rank, service and pay for the term of one year, for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, in gambling away thousands of dollars with only the pay of a naval captain to live on, and a small sum he had gotten by prizes being taken.

He was ordered to turn his vessel over to the officer next in rank, and not to report for duty until one year from date.

Another letter was from planter Kenyon, and it broke off the engagement between Kate and himself, as it said:

"My daughter shall never marry a gambler, such as you have proven yourself to be, and one whose temper has allowed him to take the life of his seamen for slight offense."

Another letter was from Benedict the gambler, demanding an immediate settlement of his large claim, and the last was a missive addressed in the hand of Kate Kenyon.

It admitted her love for him, forgave him his broken pledges, for much had come to her of his wrong-doings, and said that when he proved himself worthy of her, she could become his

wife, for her father sought her happiness more than all else, and would forgive all when he knew that he was sincere.

"I love her more than I do her money, and she shall be mine; but bah! she will soon know of my disgrace in the navy, and then she will despise me."

"I will go and see Marks, make him give me money, pay off my debts, go to Washington and show that I do not owe a dollar, and have been maligned, and then Kate shall be my wife, for the Government will pardon me, I know, and restore me to my rank and duty."

"Now to see Marks, for all depends upon that rascal," and leaving the room he walked rapidly toward the home of the strange individual whom he only knew as Marks.

CHAPTER X.

MARKS'S TERMS.

A KNOCK at the door, and his name, brought Marks down, lantern in hand, and Carl Casandra was soon seated in the same easy-chair where he had sat on a former occasion, and proven himself the tool of a greater villain than himself.

"Well, captain, back again?" said Marks, who sat at his table, as before, with gold and papers on it.

"Yes," was the sullen reply.

"What luck?"

"None."

"That is bad."

"For me, yes."

"For both of us."

"I know I am driven to desperation."

"Never despair, captain."

"Read that document," and he handed over the official communication regarding his punishment.

"This is bad."

"I should think so; but this is worse."

He handed over the letter of Cyle Kenyon.

"Ah! this looks bad!"

"And here."

It was the letter from Benedict the gambler.

"I did not know about this."

"No, for I drew that and lost it before I sailed."

"After your promise to play only the thousand?"

"Curse you and your promises!

"I promised Kate Kenyon to reform, and I have not done so, only have gone worse."

"Well?"

"I have a letter from her; but you shall not pollute it with your villainous eyes, Marks, for I love her with all my soul, and she will marry me if all goes well."

"What do you call going well?"

"If I reform."

"Why do you not do so?"

"I intend to."

"When?"

"As soon as I have paid my debts."

"Your reform is doubtless a long way off, for as I understood you, you had not captured a keel."

"Not one."

"Then how will you pay?"

"I cannot."

"Then you cannot marry."

"You must pay all for me."

"You have no claim upon me, Captain Casandra."

"I know you to be the receiver of smuggled and piratical goods."

"Ah! that is excellent; for you turned pirate, and now accuse me of buying the goods you captured."

"Well, this is good."

"You are a villain, Marks."

"Calling me names, my dear Casandra, does not anger me in the least."

"But turn your eyes upon yourself, and let us see what you can do."

"I can do nothing."

"Do you give up?"

"No, I depend upon you."

"Well, I have a little plan."

"What is it?"

"You cannot get your commission back so that must go."

"Why?"

"You can do nothing with Government, that is certain, so sit down and send in your resignation, at the same time protesting your innocence, and asking that an examination might be made into your affairs."

"And find out all?"

"Listen!"

"Oh! I'm all ears."

"This will give you the sympathy of the

Naval Secretary, and you can thus leave the service on your resignation.

"Then you must disappear wholly, giving out that you are going far away, to invest your little savings."

"I do not see what you are heading for."

"You will soon discover."

"You must pay your gambling-debts and all, leave here with a clean record, and when next you come back, come back with flying colors."

"How can I?"

"There is war threatening with England, and though it may be a year before it breaks out, it must come eventually, and, as captain of a privateer, you can get reinstated in the navy, don't you see?"

"How can I get a privateer?"

"Get a vessel now, and you will have her for use when the time comes."

"I am all in the dark, Marks, as to what you are about."

"Well, to explain, for you know very plainly my hints about it, I will furnish you with an armed vessel and crew within ten days, and you can put to sea in her."

"What for?"

"As a cruiser."

"But there is no war."

"True, but you must make a living in the mean time, and I will give you the means."

"To turn pirate?"

"Exactly."

"Marks, I do not know what to make of you."

"Do you remember the night I saved your life, when three deserters from your vessel had you at their mercy, and intended killing you?"

"You know that I cannot forget it."

"Well, Casandra, I told you then that I was a man no one could fathom, and you have not yet found me out."

"Let me tell you that I was born in poverty, but swore to be rich."

"I was well born, and my name was all I inherited."

"I drifted about, and at last struck the wake of that which would lead me to fortune."

"I am now a rich man, a very rich man, and I have made it all by selling smuggled and pirated goods."

"I let no man know me as I am, excepting you of course, and no man's life has been allowed to stand between me and my ends, and no life ever shall."

"This is all you need to know of me."

"Now I have watched you closely, and have seen just what you were coming to, so I have proven my friendship by preparing for it."

"I have had built a superb schooner, armed and equipped her fully, and she has a crew of seventy good men."

"Now, I want you to take her and put to sea in her."

"Wear the disguise I gave you before, in your piratical capture of your prizes, and take command."

"She is mine, as I tell you, and the other officers and crew are to have forty per cent. of your earnings, ten per cent. are to go for expenses, and the balance we can equally divide between us, and this will make all things even, and you should make an independent fortune in a year."

Carl Casandra was thunderstruck, and knew not what to say.

For a long time he sat in silence, and then said:

"But Kate Kenyon will forget me, if I remain a year away."

"Oh no, for you can write her that you go West, and I will send a letter out there for you now and then, and have it mailed to her, so as to keep up the idea."

"When war breaks out you go to Castle Kenyon in a schooner, which you tell her you have bought and fitted out from your ventures out West, and she will readily become your wife."

"As you will have no debts, and nothing be against you, and you resign, she can but believe you all that her fancy has painted you."

"Now, I pay your debts, if you take command of this schooner, and I will dispose of all the booty you capture, and tell you just where to send it and how."

"What do you say, sir?"

"I know not what to say."

"You know what will follow if you do not accept my terms."

"I am ruined."

"True, and more, you will be arrested by Benedict and others, and then Kate Kenyon is forever lost to you; but in following out my schemes, you win fortune, and in the end fame, when the war comes, for you turn your pirate craft into an honest privateer."

"It is a fearful temptation, Marks."

"Then you consent?"

"Yes."

"Enough! ten nights from this you sail in the schooner Spit-fire, and, as Captain Carl the Corsair no one will know you, for the West Indian waters, must be your haunts for there are the richly freighted ships under all flags."

"I congratulate you, Captain Carl the Corsair, and wish you every success," and Marks arose and bowed with mock gravity and respect while Carl Casandra buried his face in his hands and groaned:

"Great God! I am lost! and my own acts have encompassed my utter ruin."

CHAPTER XI.

A VISITOR AT CASTLE KENYON.

It was a bitter blow to Kate Kenyon when it became known to her that her lover had broken his pledges to her.

She had received several anonymous communications, telling her of his evil doings and at last had gone to her father with them.

He had then told her what he had seen, and going up to Baltimore had satisfied himself that Carl Casandra was in every way unworthy of his daughter.

So he had returned and told her so, and then each wrote to the young captain the letters which he had received upon his return from his cruise.

Soon after it became known, in the same mysterious way, that Carl Casandra had resigned, to save himself from dismissal from the service, and that he had gone to some western State.

It stated, however, that he had paid his debts, yet hinted that to do so he must have had a successful night at gambling.

The next mail Kate received a letter from Carl himself.

It was dated away out in St. Louis, and told her he had come there to make his fortune, had invested his little savings, and would return to claim her some day, when he could prove to her he had reformed his life.

Kate was delighted, yet in her heart there was a doubt which she could not cast away from her; but she determined to wait for a certain length of time which Carl Casandra had asked, and then, if he was not a different man to cast him out of her heart forever.

Several days after this a visitor arrived at Castle Kenyon.

He came in his private carriage, with slaves in livery, and the planter being away from home Kate gave him welcome.

He introduced himself as Merton Regnier; a South Carolina planter, and an old college chum of her father.

Kate had heard her father speak of his early boyhood friends often, yet never remembered the name of Merton Regnier as being among them; but she received the gentleman cordially, and found him to be a most charming companion.

He was very distinguished-looking, conversed pleasantly upon all topics, and said he was traveling North for pleasure, and had concluded to stop over a night with his old friend, Cyle Kenyon.

Kate was not in the parlor when the planter entered, a servant having told him that a visitor had arrived.

"My dear Cyle, how are you?" cried the stranger, arising.

"Merton Regnier! Good God!" Like a statue stood the planter, not even taking the outstretched hand of the visitor, who said pleasantly:

"You remember me then, Kenyon, in spite of the score of years passed since last we met?"

"Yes, I remember you; but I deemed you dead," and the planter seemed deeply moved by some bygone memory.

"No, I am not dead, Cyle, as you see, and being on my way North I stopped over to see you, for I have kept track of you."

"As to the past, so bitter to you, let that pass, and let us be friends again."

"You forgive then, and are willing to forget?" asked the planter in a low tone.

"Yes, so let the matter drop."

"And you will not speak of—"

"No, no, it is with the buried past, and no one shall know; but what a lovely daughter you have."

"You have seen her?" and the planter turned pallid.

"Oh, yes, and had a most charming chat with her."

"She left the parlor but a short while ago, to see about some household matters."

"You did not tell—"

"No, no, no! don't fret yourself, Cyle, for all is well between us, and I bury all ill feelings in the past."

"I was a poor boy in those days, but now I am a very wealthy man, I assure you, and I hope to have you visit my home some time."

The planter's manner now changed, and held forth his hand in welcome to his guest.

Soon after Kate came in, and she saw that her father and the stranger had indeed been old friends, for they chatted over college days together in a most pleasant way.

Merton Regnier was a few years the junior of Cyle Kenyon, for he had scarcely lived beyond forty years, and was certainly a well-preserved man, while the gray was beginning to show upon the temples of the planter, and he looked like one who dwelt in memory with the past, when left to his own thoughts.

For more than a week did Merton Regnier remain at Castle Kenyon, and then he took his departure, promising to stop on his return South for a short while.

As for Kate, she did not know whether she liked the man or not.

He was always courtly, and certainly most entertaining upon all subjects on which their conversation turned.

He seemed to have read everything; he knew how to handle a boat with skill, and in a tramp for game would bring back a full string.

He was a good musician, sketched with skill and taste, and painted her several views, one of the little burying-ground on the hillside.

In an indifferent way he let it be known that he was very wealthy and had no family ties, while he added:

"I guess, for the sake of old times, Miss Kate, I will have to make you my heiress."

After his departure Kate could not get him out of her mind.

He seemed to fairly haunt her memory, and she felt the influence of his large dark eyes.

"Had I never known Carl, I believe I might have loved that man; but no, I do not think it is love I feel for him, and yet he seems to impress me in a way I cannot understand."

So she said, and when Merton Regnier returned on his way South, she was both glad and sorry to see him.

He brought the latest tidings in news, and the papers were full of a daring buccaneer that was a scourge upon the Mexican Gulf.

"His name is Carl the Corsair," said Merton Regnier, and planter Kenyon remarked with a smile:

"Carl the Corsair; yes I have heard much of him of late."

"He has the same name of your old lover, Kate; but he certainly cannot have turned pirate."

"Father, I received a letter from Captain Casandra two weeks ago, as you know, dated from St. Louis, and besides, he is not one to turn pirate, no matter what excuse he might have to drive him to such an act."

"I was but joking, Kate; but this corsair seems to be a terror, Merton, from all accounts in these papers you brought with you."

"Yes, he has a score of war-vessels in chase of him, and I only hope he will be taken and hanged."

Whether it was the name that drew Kate toward the corsair, or not, I cannot say; but certain it is she read all of the accounts of the daring sea rover before she went to sleep that night, and when she dreamed it was that Carl Casandra was the buccaneer chief and he came and carried her off to make her his bride.

For a long time did Merton Regnier remain visiting Castle Kenyon, and ere he departed, he had asked Kate to become his wife, and her father for her hand.

Kate had refused him, telling him frankly that she was engaged to Carl Casandra.

"But should he not return?"

"I will make no promises, Mr. Regnier," was the firm response.

"The girl must be urged to it by her father, and so I must see him," and Merton Regnier walked out toward the cliff where he had seen Mr. Kenyon going a short while before.

There he found him, and a glance told him that the planter wore a troubled look.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PLANTER'S REMORSE.

"CYCLE, my friend, I have sought you here to have a talk with you," said Merton Regnier, as he walked up to his friend, the planter, where he stood upon the cliff.

"I know what you would say, Merton," suddenly remarked the planter.

"Ah!"

"Yes, I know all."

"What would I say?"

"You would tell me that you love my child."

"True."

"And ask her hand of me"

"Yes."

"I have seen this coming for days, Requier, and I could do nothing; but now I must speak."

"Well?"

"I could never consent."

"Miss Kenyon will marry me, I feel assured, if you consent, as soon as she has found out how worthless a fellow her lover is."

"What know you of him?" quickly asked the planter.

"I know him, and that he lives in St. Louis."

"I have been there since I left here, three months ago, and I know all about him."

"He pretends to be living an honest life, but he is gambling, and that is his only means of support, while he is very dissipated."

"I knew him as a boy, and I met him in St. Louis, and he told me of his love for your daughter and of his misfortunes."

"He did not, of course, know that I even know you; but he said that he was making some money by gambling, and would come some day to claim his lady-love, and after she became his wife he would reform."

"Now, you know, he should reform *first*, or he never will."

"I have not told your daughter this, but leave it for you to do, only do not tell her where you got your information."

"I will not; and I thank you, Regnier; but then, you are double the age of my child, and she certainly does not love you."

"No, her first love is for that wretch Casandra, and I will have to win her love after she has cast him out of her heart."

"Now promise me to say and do all you can in my behalf."

"I cannot."

"Why?"

"Well, I do not wish my child to marry you."

"Bah!"

"She is young, beautiful, rich, and she will get over her love for this unworthy object, and marry some noble young fellow yet."

"I love her with all my soul, Kenyon, and wish to marry her."

"No; I will tell her of Casandra, and then take her to England again, remaining there until her brother completes his education at the university."

"No, you must give her to me."

"I will not."

"Cyle Kenyon, let me recall the past to you!"

"No, no! do not do that!"

"We were chums together: you a senior, I a freshman, at college."

"You were rich and lived in luxury, while I, a poor parson's son, was a pauper, and was given my tuition."

"My father died, and my sister—an adopted sister, but one I loved as though she were my kin—came to live in my little home."

"You remember our home, two small bed-rooms, and one large sitting-room and kitchen combined."

"My sister—for I knew no other love for her—was content, but I was wretched, because I was poor."

"You remember her, Cyle, with her great black eyes and lovely face?"

"Poor Ruth! I often recall her—"

"For God's sake, Regnier, do not say more," fairly groaned the planter.

"I must have my say, Cyle."

"One day you saw my sister, and you at once wished to know her."

"I took you to tea one evening."

"It was a humble supper, but you enjoyed it and stayed late."

"You were the same age as my sister, while I was younger, and hardly understood what you talked of."

"After that you came often, and one night you visited our little room in company with a friend."

"You had been drinking deeply, and you urged Ruth to go with you to be married that very night."

"I was ambitious then, Cyle, and I urged her too, and she consented, for she loved you devotedly."

"Thus you were married; but when you became sober you cursed your act and you hated my sister and myself."

"Poor Ruth, she departed from our little home, and she went off to get work elsewhere,

far from you, for she had pride, Kenyon, and she showed it."

"But she had loved too deeply, and alas! she never got over the shock of finding that she would not have been your choice."

"My dear Regnier, I well know what she suffered through me, and how you too must have suffered for her."

"But I have suffered bitter remorse for my act, and long after your letter telling me that she had gone from this life in despair, I lay ill, expected to die by all."

"But I recovered, and my wild life was given up, and I have since then been a man; but never can I forget my crime in deserting that poor loving girl, as I did, and I feel that I am guilty, as having caused her death."

"Kenyon, let me tell you again, that I love your daughter, and I wish you to urge her to be my wife."

"I beg it of you, and yet tell you frankly that you would not like this act of yours in the past known."

"For God's sake, no!"

"And more, Kenyon, I did not write you the exact truth in saying that Ruth had gone from this life in despair."

"I meant to convey the idea that she had died, when really she had *given up the world for a convent*."

Cyle Kenyon staggered backward, and but for a tree near, would have gone over the cliff to his death.

Springing to his side, Merton Regnier grasped his arm, and said:

"My God, man, arouse yourself!"

"Is she dead or not?"

"No; she lives in a convent."

"And I have since married, believing her dead."

"Oh, God! oh, God! have mercy!"

"Kenyon, no one knows this secret but I, for all believe Ruth to be dead, as she so determined that they should."

"This secret I will keep; but I beg of you, having suffered, look upon my love for your daughter, and give your consent to her becoming my wife."

"Regnier, it is not for me to say nay, if you can win the love of my child, knowing all, and I will not."

"And you will urge her to accept me?"

"I will not say one word but in your favor."

"Thank you, Kenyon."

And the two men walked back together from the cliff.

That night the mail came, and in it was a letter from Kate's anonymous correspondent, telling her of the deeds of Carl Casandra in the West, and a St. Louis paper with a notice in it that the gambler, Carl Casandra, had won a large sum of money from a planter, who had attacked him in a frenzy, and met his death at the hands of the gambler.

"He is indeed unworthy of my love, and I will tear his image from my heart, and to help me do so, I will pledge myself to Merton Regnier," said Kate.

And the next day the South Carolinian departed with Kate's pledge to become his wife.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MEETING ON THE CLIFF.

It seemed strange, very strange, to Kate Kenyon that the past two years had made such a change in her life.

With her brother at home, and her mother living, she had been as free as a bird, with only thought for enjoyment and to pass her merry life away.

But death stalked into the household, and it took her loved mother, and the first grief of her life fell upon the young girl.

A broad they went, the father and his two children, and the dear old home was left deserted.

Traveling in foreign lands, Kate Kenyon had to give up her hoydenish life and become a dignified young lady.

Then came the parting with her brother, the return to the desolate home, and next the fearful tempest that had brought back the courage of yore to her, and made her do the bravest deed of her life.

Out of that act love had sprung, and then the one she had given her heart to was found to be unworthy.

Next, a man, her father's boyhood companion, came and offered his love, and burying the bitter past in the inmost depths of her heart, she had promised to wed this strange, fascinating man, who was old enough to be her father.

How all had changed for her, and for the worst.

Such were her thoughts one evening as she sat

upon the cliff enjoying the sunset view, and observing the movements of a small schooner-of-war that lay becalmed hardly a mile off-shore.

She had gazed with admiration upon the symmetry of the vessel, and noted that every rope and spar was in its place, and that the craft seemed to be held under thorough discipline.

Long-hulled, lying low in the sea, narrow and without doubt very deep, she looked like an ocean racer, for her tall masts and long spars showed that she could spread an immense amount of canvas.

As darkness came on the striking of eight bells was borne across the waters to the ear of the maiden, and then a light glimmered here and there about the vessel.

Her father was away, and would not return until late, and as the moon was just rising out of the blue waters of the bay, Kate would not return to the mansion.

She felt very blue, and the shadow upon her life she could not shake off.

She was dressed in pure white, and among the trees upon the cliff, as the rising moon cast its rays upon her, she looked like a ghost standing there in the weird light.

After pacing to and fro, the impulse of her thoughts moving her to action, she threw herself upon a rustic seat and for a long time remained motionless.

At last her thoughts found vent in words that seemed to rise from her lips like a wail.

"Oh, Carl! Carl! where are you this night, and why were you false to your vows when I love you so dearly?"

"Kate?"

In an instant she was upon her feet, her form trembling with emotion.

"Oh Heaven have mercy, can he be dead, and was my name, spoken by his lips, one of those strange warnings that sometimes come to us?" she said in a hoarse whisper.

"No, Kate, I am not dead, though without your love I would rather be."

She gave a glad cry and sprung toward the tall form that stepped out into the moonlight from the shadow of the trees.

"Carl! Carl! it is indeed you?"

"Yes, my beautiful Kate," he cried, and he would have folded her to his heart, but she drew back quickly, and said haughtily:

"Captain Casandra, between your life and mine a great barrier has been set, and we meet as strangers."

"No, no, Kate, you cannot cast me off so, for I heard your words awhile since, and I know that you love me; but why is it you cast me off now?"

"You broke your pledges to me and went to the bad, for I had no influence over you."

"Ah, Kate, misfortune overtook me, and I went away to earn a fortune to return and lay it at your feet."

"I have been successful beyond my brightest anticipations, and I come now to claim you."

"Carl Casandra, the fortune you have won you have gotten at the gaming-table, and I would rather die than have you offer me gold thus gotten."

"It would be on a par with love that was false."

"Kate, you bitterly wrong me, for I have not touched a card in long months, nor have I won one dollar in gaming."

"How I have made my money you shall some day know, but not now."

"I know that your father has cast me off, and that I have few friends now; but I deemed you true, and I came to tell you that I love you more dearly than ever, and ask you to be ready to fly with me far from here."

"I would not fly from my home, Carl, to become your wife, but marry you here, for my father would give his consent if you proved your words, just spoken to me, to be true."

"Oh, Carl! prove to father that you are not what men say you are, and all will be well."

"I will prove it."

"And soon, Carl, for before very long I am pledged to marry another."

"Nay, do no frown so and bite your lips, for I do not love him."

"Who is he?" hoarsely said Carl Casandra.

"An old boyhood friend of my father, a South Carolina planter, and a most excellent man."

"Believing you were false to your love, when I heard you were false to yourself, I did as father asked and became engaged to Mr. Merton Regnier."

"Is Merton Regnier his name?"

"Yes."

"I shall not forget it; but where did you say that he lived?"

"On the South Carolina coast, somewhere near Charleston, I believe."

"Well, Kate, I, not Merton Regnier, shall claim you, for I would rather see you dead than the wife of another man."

"I believe, now that I see you, Carl, I would rather die than marry any one else, for I even forgive you your broken pledges; but, Carl, how did you come here?"

"Do you see yonder vessel?"

"Yes, and I was watching her for a long time."

"She brought me here."

"What! are you again in the navy?"

"No; but I have a dear friend in the commander of yonder schooner, and he brought me here."

"I saw you seated on this cliff, and watched you for a long time with my glass."

"As soon as it grew dark I sprung into the captain's gig and came ashore to see you, and I would have done so, had I had to boldly face your father's anger."

"I am so glad you have come; but when will you return to prove that your words are true, and that you are not guilty of the things I have read and heard about you?"

"When are you to be married to this southern planter?"

"Two months from to-day."

"Then I will be here a week before that time, and I will come to this spot every night until I meet you here."

"I will count the hours, Carl, and pray that you may bring the proof that you have been cruelly maligned."

"Trust me, Kate, and remember, one week before the day set before your marriage, I will be here on this spot."

"I will bring you the proof, and let you show them to your father."

"If he still refuses to let you become my wife, and wishes to force you into a marriage with Merton Regnier, then I will claim you, and if you love me you will fly with me."

"Should my father attempt to urge this other marriage upon me, Carl, after I am convinced of your innocence, then I will go with you wherever you wish."

"You swear this, Kate Kenyon?"

"I do, though my word is as good as my oath."

"Enough—I believe you."

"Yes, Carl, prove your innocence, and I will give up all for you."

"I will prove it, Kate; but now I must go," and after a fond farewell the young sailor departed.

Kate watched him descend the pathway to the shore, saw a dark object she knew to be his boat speed out over the waters, which were now rippled by a breeze which had sprung up with the rising moon, and soon after beheld the pretty schooner-of-war spread her white wings and glide swiftly away.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE APPOINTMENT.

SLOWLY dragged the days away to Kate Kenyon, after she had met her lover upon the cliff.

The memory of Merton Regnier became almost distasteful to her when she compared him with Carl Casandra, and she had no doubt but that the young sailor could clear his character of the tarnish upon it.

True, she had received anonymous letters regarding him. She had read the notice in the papers regarding his killing a man over a game of cards, and her father had told her how a friend of his, whose name he would not make known, had seen the young sailor in St. Louis, and knew him to be all that was bad.

"I believe him true, for he says so," was her argument, and she did not doubt but that he could prove what he said.

One day, a short while before Merton Regnier was expected at Castle Kenyon, Kate said to her father:

"Do you believe, father, that Captain Casandra was as bad as people made him out?"

"I feel convinced, Kate, that he is even worse."

"Father, I believe that he has been bitterly maligned."

"Kate, it seems strange that you should say so, after all that you have heard."

"As for others, I know not the truth except as they tell the story; but for myself, I saw him gambling, as you know, and he had lost an immense sum."

"He was drinking heavily and gambling recklessly, and, when I was in Washington I was assured that he had only his pay and a few thousand dollars prize money."

"Yet, I saw him give his due bill for twenty thousand, and what was more, it was paid, for Benedict the gambler told me so."

"Father, if he would give you proof that he was keeping his pledge to me, would you let me marry him?"

"Kate, are you mad?"

"No, sir."

"Why, within a few days you are to marry Merton Regnier, and you are talking of this scapegoat Casandra."

"Will you answer my question, father?"

"What is it?"

"Would you, with proof of his innocence, allow me to break with Merton Regnier, and marry Carl Casandra?"

"He can bring no proof."

"But were he to do so?"

"He can give no proof that I would accept."

"Then you wish me to marry Merton Regnier?"

"Yes, although I would rather far that you had decided upon some one else."

"It is not too late."

"It is, for the day is set, and you must marry Regnier."

"And Carl?"

"What mean you?"

"You would not receive him?"

"Never! for I know more of his life, Kate, than I have made known to you."

Kate sighed, and taking her sun hat walked out into the garden, saying quietly:

"This looks very much as though I would have to elope with Carl, for father will never give his consent."

"Poor, dear, Carl! I do hope he can prove all that he has told me, for then I will be happy indeed."

The next day Merton Regnier arrived at the castle.

He came with quite a retinue of servants and horses, and looked like a prince traveling through the land.

He was pleasantly greeted by the planter, though that same faraway look came back into the face of Cyle Kenyon, which seemed ever to dwell there when Merton Regnier was near.

Perhaps it was the remembrance his presence revived of poor Ruth, the adopted sister of the man who had now come to marry the daughter of his university chum of twenty-five years before.

Kate felt a slight shudder at sight of the man she had promised to marry; but she greeted him kindly, drew away when he would have kissed her, and, as soon as supper was over, excused herself, on the plea of a headache, and left the gentlemen together.

But Kate did not go to her room, but slipped out into the flower-garden and wended her way to the cliff.

She started as she got there, as a form came toward her.

Even in the darkness she recognized that elegant, commanding figure, and sprung toward him.

"Oh, Carl! you are here?"

"Yes, I have been here since just after night-fall."

"But you are in uniform; you are surely back in the navy?"

"You shall know all, Kate."

"But the proofs?"

"Of my innocence?"

"Yes."

"I have only my word, my love for you, and if you cannot believe me, Kate, I will banish myself from your presence."

"Come with me, Kate, and see if I do not prove my love in every way."

"I have a vessel not far away; you cannot see her from here, and I am her commander, for that much I confess to you."

"Oh, Carl!"

"More I cannot say."

"She is a vessel-of-war?"

"Yes, Kate, well armed and equipped, the same pretty schooner that you saw here two months ago and admired so."

"You said your friend had—"

"True, my friend is myself."

"I am her commander."

"Then, Carl, why have you not captured that horrid pirate they say is at the entrance to the Chesapeake, doing so much damage to our shipping?"

"You mean my namesake, Carl the Corsair, as they call him?"

"Yes, and I start at his very name, although it is the same as yours."

"I will meet him some time, Kate; but now tell me what your father says?"

"He will not believe other than that you are guilty, and says no proof will satisfy him."

"And this Merton Regnier?"

"He arrived to-day."

"And you intend to become his wife?"

"Father expects me to; but, Carl, I thought you were out in St. Louis?"

"I was, for awhile, Kate."

"Let me tell you that I found out to-night that Mr. Regnier saw you there."

"He saw me?"

"Yes, for he knows you well; and he it was who told father how dissipated you were, and how terribly you gambled, while he gave me the paper that spoke of your killing a man at the card-table."

"Kate, this is not true, and he has spoken falsely to you."

"Your presence here seems to prove it, Carl."

"Yes, for I never saw this man Regnier in my life, and more, Kate, wishing to see the man you had pledged yourself to, I cruised down the Carolina coast, and nowhere could I hear of such a person."

"Oh, Carl! you could not have gone to the right part of the country, for Mr. Regnier is very rich, and such a prominent person as he is, must be well known."

"Where did you address your letters to him, if you wrote?"

"Yes, I wrote several times."

"And how did you address his letters?"

"To Merton Regnier."

"But where?"

"To the care of his agent in Baltimore, for he said he always forwarded them to him more quickly than by the regular mail."

"And did your letters come through Baltimore?"

"Yes, I believe they did."

"Kate, this Merton Regnier is a fraud."

"Oh, Carl!"

"I mean it."

"But how can he be?"

"As easily as I could be, did I so wish."

"Carl?"

"You say he came here with his servants?"

"Yes."

"And horses and carriages?"

"Yes, he has a valet, a coachman and footman, and half a dozen horses, two of which are saddle animals, and one he presented me with to-day."

"Kate, you better marry me and hope for the best, and that I will prove all that you could wish, than marry that fellow who I am convinced is an adventurer."

"But, Carl, he is an old friend of father."

"Well, even your father might be deceived in him."

"But what motive would he have?"

"Your money."

"But I tell you he is enormously rich, and he bought me a jewel necklace to-day worth a fortune."

"Well, your beauty has won him, for you are lovely enough, Kate, to make a saint sin."

"Carl, you must not talk so; but let me ask you what you wish me to do?"

"Meet me, to-morrow night, down at the boat-house at nine o'clock."

"You will be there?"

"Yes, with a boat, for you must fly with me, Kate, as that fellow shall never have you."

"Ah, Carl! I feel sad to think I must run away from my home, and my dear father; but it would be sacrilege, to marry Merton Regnier loving you as I do, and to remain here would be to be bound to him."

"I will go with you, Carl, and become your wife, but, oh! do not prove yourself false I beseech you, for it would break my heart."

"I will come, so be prompt; as I will be very nervous if I have to wait there alone."

"I will be there, Kate, and you need bring no luggage, for I have a trousseau for you worthy of a princess."

"Why, Carl, you amaze me!"

"It is true, Kate, as you shall see; but now you must hasten back, and until to-morrow night farewell."

Thus they parted, he to return to his vessel, she, never dreaming of the trap laid for her, to go back to her home believing him true.

CHAPTER XV.

KIDNAPPED.

"WHAT! going to leave us so soon?" said Merton Regnier, as Kate arose to leave the parlor, the evening after her interview with Carl Casandra.

"Yes, I am nervous to-night, so will not inflict my company upon you."

"Good-night, father!" and as she bent over

and kissed him, he started as a tear fell upon his forehead.

"Why, Kate, my child, you are weeping," he said tenderly, and she burst into tears, and threw her arms about him.

A moment she stood thus, and then she kissed him quickly and ran out of the room, without a word to Merton Regnier.

"Poor child, she is indeed nervous; but it is not strange, when a few days more she is to be married," said the planter quickly.

"She shall never shed a tear that I will bring into her beautiful eyes," responded Merton Regnier, and the two turned to their cigars and a game of cards.

In the mean time Kate had gone to her room, and placing there on a table a letter she had already written to her father, she left by the side of it a morocco box that contained the jewels which Merton Regnier had presented to her.

In the box was a note, and its contents were:

"Forgive me for the pain that I may give you, in thus flying from you; but I have one love in my heart that I cannot banish, and it would be sacrilege to become your wife."

"To that one I go, and soon I shall be his wife, and for all you may suffer through me, again I ask you to forgive me, and forget me."

"I return you your jewels, and may your life be ever happy is the wish of Your friend,
"KATE KENYON."

To her father she wrote:

"MY DEAREST FATHER:-"

"Do not blame me, and utterly cast me out of your heart, because I have acted for myself and fled with Carl Casandra, the one being I love as a woman should love the man she would call husband."

"I am deeply pained to cause you sorrow; but you remember that you said no proof would you take of Carl's innocence, and I knew that you would not receive him in your home."

"I feel that he is innocent, and hence I go with him to-night, and ere long will be his wife."

"Father, I sue for your forgiveness, and if you are willing to take me to your heart again, address me under my married name, through the New York post-office, telling me you forgive me."

"Farewell, father, and Heaven bless you."

"Your loving daughter,
"KATE."

Hastily throwing a wrap about her, and seizing a small hand-bag, she had already packed, Kate Kenyon stole out of her room, and, as noiselessly as a thief, left the mansion.

Across the lawn she went, down the gravel walk to the shore of the little harbor, and out upon the boat-house pier.

The water dashed against the pier with a weird sound, and all was darkness about her.

But suddenly a voice whispered:

"Kate!"

"Carl!"

Thus they met, and in a moment more a boat with muffled oars was pulling swiftly out of the little harbor.

Four oarsmen were in the boat, their blades rising and falling with the precision of man-of-war's-men, and in the stern with her, sat Carl Casandra, his hand upon the tiller.

Out of the cove went the boat, through the channel without a miss, and there, putting his helm a-port, Carl Casandra turned the prow down the coast.

A row of half a league, and close under the wooded shores lay a vessel.

It was the armed schooner which Kate had once seen from the cliff.

Running alongside, Carl Casandra aided Kate on deck, and then gave orders to get the schooner under way.

"Ay, ay, sir!" said the officer, saluting, and then he added, as the companionway light fell full upon the face of the maiden:

"As beautiful as a dream! but what an outrage that she is to become a pirate's bride."

"Here, Kate, this cabin is yours until we reach New York, when you shall become my wife."

"Make yourself contented here, for no one shall disturb you, for the entire cabin I devote to you."

"After we get under way, Mr. Lennox, my lieutenant, and myself will come in and have supper with you—so now, excuse me."

He turned away, and Kate Kenyon dropped into a chair and burst into tears, for she felt for the pain her flight must give her loving father and her brother in faraway England, when he should know of what she had done.

She heard the rapid movement of feet overhead, the low, stern orders of the officers, and felt the vessel careen gently to the wind, as it filled her sails.

Then came the musical ripple left in the schooner's wake, and she felt that she was in-

deed launched upon life's sea, to drift with the tide wheresoever Fate would carry her.

Glancing up, her eyes fell upon a name in gilt letters.

Instantly her gaze became riveted upon it, and then in a moan the words came from her lips:

"The Spitfire! Great God! this is the vessel of Carl the Corsair! and I have fled from my home with a pirate!"

Then she sunk down upon the floor in a leap, for she had swooned away, overcome by the torrent of emotion that surged into her heart and brain.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PIRATE'S THREAT.

How long Kate lay in a swoon she did not know, but at last consciousness returned to her and she started as the wash of waters reached her ears, and glancing around she saw where she was.

Instantly she recalled how bitterly she had been deceived by the man she loved, and from her heart faded every atom of affection for him, while in its place the seeds of hatred and revenge were shown.

Kate was, as the reader has seen, utterly fearless, and her strong nature came to her rescue in her distress, and she soon threw off the almost overpowering anguish upon her, and nerved herself to bear the ordeal before her.

The schooner was gliding along at a seven-knot pace, and glancing out of the stern-ports, Kate saw that she was leaving a snowy wake behind her.

Far in the distance she saw a light, and she recognized it as the one shining in the hall of Castle Kenyon.

Had they missed her yet, she wondered, and dropping her head upon her hand she again wept.

But only for a moment, as she started to her feet and said:

"Away all feeling, for he shall not see what I suffer."

"Ah! he is coming."

She took her seat near the table, in such a way that the cabin lamp would not fall upon her face, and just then in came Carl Casandra and another.

That other was a young officer, good-looking, reckless-faced, and with the air of one who took life as it came to him, good or bad.

"Ah, Kate, you are reading I see," said Carl Casandra, as he saw her hand upon an open book.

"That is right, for you must not get homesick; but permit me to present to you my first luff, Lucas Lennox, a gallant gentleman and thorough seaman, and who is to be my groomsman when we are married."

Kate bowed coldly and said nothing, and Carl Casandra continued:

"I have ordered the steward to bring supper in here, and we can have a pleasant little time, for Lennox sups with us with your consent."

"I would much prefer Mr. Lennox to remain," was the cold reply, and Carl Casandra started and looked at her fixedly.

"Are you angry, Kate, about anything?"

"Your vessel, I see is the Spitfire?" she said, in an off-handed way, as though to change the subject.

"Yes, do you not like her?" he asked.

"And are you Carl, the Corsair?" she asked in a sharp way.

"Why, Kate, what an idea!" and the man turned pale.

"Answer me?"

He saw her blazing eyes and her pallid face, and he said:

"Kate, do not ask questions now, for all will come well in the end."

"Are you Carl the Corsair?" she repeated in the same stern tone.

"Well, if I am, Kate?" he said with a forced laugh.

"Then I look upon you as a more despicable creature than I thought even a pirate could become," was the savage retort, and both of the men flinched under her bitter words.

"Kate, I did not bring Lennox here to listen to you insult me," said Carl Casandra, in a deprecatory manner.

"Then you and Mr. Lennox are at liberty to retire, for I believe that I am to have the full use of this cabin as long as I remain on board."

Lennox quickly bowed himself out, but Carl Casandra remained, and said hesitatingly:

"Kate, will you not listen to reason?"

"Reason! it is a wonder that my reason is not gone, when I discover your treachery."

"Kate, listen to me, and let me tell you all!" pleaded the man.

"I will listen, to hear what more that is false your lips can utter."

"Kate, you saved my life, as you know—"

"Ay! and you, in return, would wreck mine?"

"No, I mean it not so, Kate, for I love you. I was wayward, extravagant, wrong—ay, wicked, and I met you when I had no aim in life but ambition."

"You saved me from death, and you saved me from myself."

"I was poor, only my captain's pay; but I was passionately fond of gambling, and all I had went over the chance table."

"When you bade me hope, I determined to try my luck but once and win, for your sake. I tried and I failed."

"I plunged deeper into the mire, and in my despair I turned to one who aided me."

"All was clear sailing then except the debt I owed him."

"Then it was that I went to see you, and while there received the sweet assurance that you would become my wife. But I was penniless, and—"

"Penniless, with the certificate of deposit for twenty thousand dollars which you handed to my father?"

"It was the money given me by the friend I spoke of to pay my debts with," was the ready reply.

"I paid my debts on my return, and was once more tempted to gamble."

"Again I plunged deeper; my prizes, as you know, were retaken by the smugglers, and I went on a cruise to redeem myself."

"I returned unsuccessful, the Government had written me word that I was suspended for a year without service, pay or rank, for gambling, and my friend was pressing me for his money."

"In my despair I resigned, and then this vessel was offered to me."

"She was fitted out as a privateer, to be used as such in the war that we must soon have with England, and I went on my cruise in her."

"As a pirate?"

"I meant not to become an outlaw, Kate; but I drifted into it; the first blow was struck and I went from bad to worse."

"But about your being in St. Louis?"

"Kate, I did not go there, though I wrote letters to have you think I was there."

"And your being seen there by Mr. Regnier, the newspaper account of the murder, and—"

"All were lies, Kate, told by some enemy."

"So you have been a pirate ever since you left Baltimore?"

"I have; but I loved you through all."

"A pirate's love is a curse, Carl Casandra."

"Not mine, Kate, for it is true."

"I have ever loved you, and I determined to make you my wife, for I felt that you would forgive me all."

"I am rich, very rich now—"

"With blood-money?"

"No, I have taken many prizes without shedding a drop of blood."

"It was accidentally, for you would have killed all the same, had you been resisted."

"You are bitter, Kate."

"I am just."

"My only excuse, Kate, for doing as I have, is my love for you."

"I hate a man whose love is degrading."

"No, no, Kate, mine is true, and if you will be my wife you shall never have cause to regret it."

"Be your wife, Carl Casandra?

"Sooner would I become the wife of the meanest, lowest, cruellest pirate on board this vessel, for he at least has not deceived me, and you have."

"No, sir, I defy you, I scorn you, I hate you, and now that you know my opinion of you, and just how I feel toward you, perhaps you will tell me what will be your next cowardly move toward me?"

Carl Casandra was as white as a ghost, and his teeth fairly chattered as though he had a chill.

He was almost frenzied with rage, and yet he controlled himself wonderfully well.

He loved the girl, as one such as he could love, and he intended to make her his wife, hoping that she would forgive and forget all.

But he was determined to show her that he was master on his own vessel, and so he said:

"Kate, I love you more than all else on earth, and when you arrive in New York, I wish you to become my wife."

"If you will live with me then, go with me

the world over, I will be a happy man, and my aim shall be to make you happy.

"If you wish to leave me, when you have become my wife, you are free to go; but hear me, Kate Kenyon, until you do marry me, you shall never leave this vessel."

"You understand, wed me, and go if you wish, or remain; but unless you do, here you remain."

"As my wife, you will not dare marry another, and I will have that satisfaction, so you hear my threat and can act accordingly."

"What do you say?"

"Give me time to think," she said in a low tone, and he immediately rose and left the cabin.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE BOY PILOT.

SOME weeks passed away, after the scene in the cabin of the Spitfire, between the kidnapped girl and the young pirate captain.

The schooner had run out of the Chesapeake and headed for New York, and there seeking a secluded anchorage in the Shrewsbury river, Carl Casandra had run up to the city, leaving Kate in the cabin.

Since that night, when he brought her on board, they had spoken but seldom.

She had the full use of the cabin and ate her meals alone.

She went on deck at will, and if spoken to by Carl Casandra, she replied to him coldly.

When he returned from New York, he visited her in the cabin.

"Kate, I saw a priest to-day, and he will come on board and marry us, whenever you say the word."

"I shall never marry you, Carl Casandra, for I despise you as a despicable creature."

"Well, you know my threat, and I shall keep it."

"You do not leave this vessel until you are my wife."

"We shall see," was the calm reply.

"Well, as you know, Kate, I have taken no prize since you have been on board, nor do I wish to; but I have learned of a treasure having been buried upon the lower end of Long Island, and I believe I can find it."

"It is said that a former pirate was cast ashore there in a wreck, and there remained, having turned school-teacher."

"He was once there with a chief who buried considerable treasure one night, and this fellow, I am sure, has never found it."

"He has, it is said, a map, or the part of a one, showing where the treasure is hidden; but to find it, two maps have to be studied together, and my informant has given me the second one, so I intend to go and get that treasure."

"Another thing: from all accounts this old teacher and ex-pirate, I think is one who did me a great wrong, for he landed near my home and killed my brother, when he was attacked, and I am revengeful, so would see if he be the one."

"Now, Kate, to the other end of Long Island the Spitfire sails at once, and if I get the treasure I will give you my share if you will marry me."

"Get your treasure first, Carl Casandra," was the response, and with a muttered oath the pirate left the cabin.

Two nights afterward the schooner ran in close to the Long Island shore, and there the wind failed her, so an anchor was let go.

Listlessly the vessel rolled upon the waters, her crew anxiously regarding a storm that was slowly rising.

All could see that the anchorage was one of the greatest danger, in case of a storm, for shoals were upon every side, and a rough shore beyond.

But Carl Casandra called away a boat's crew and after studying his map started for the beach just as darkness fell upon land and sea.

He followed the directions given him, discovered the old school-house marked on his map, and which stood back from the ocean nearly a third of a mile.

"That is the place where the man lives, for it is marked, 'a school-house, surrounded by a graveyard; once a church.'

"There is a light visible, so I will enter."

He halted his men among the graves, found the door on the latch, entered the school-room, which took up the first floor, and then, with his lantern held above his head, ascended the stairs leading to the floor above, where he had been told that the old ex-pirate, as schoolmaster, had his rooms, living there and doing his own house-work.

Noiselessly he pushed the door open, and there

sat a man past fifty, his head bent over, as he gazed at something upon the table before him.

"It is that pirate Lieutenant Silas Finlay, he to whom I owe a bitter grudge," he muttered, and then aloud cried:

"Silas Finlay, we meet again!"

As he spoke he threw forward his pistol and fired, and the man's head fell upon the table a bullet in his brain.

"Curses upon me! I have alarmed the neighborhood, and more, have lost by his death, the secret he held."

"Hark! that is thunder, and the storm is not far off."

"I will hasten back to the vessel; but I will come again."

Back to the schooner he went with his men, and upon arriving there discovered that the calm still remained upon the waters, and the storm was sweeping down from seaward with awful menace.

"My God, Lennox! without a pilot, I fear we are lost here when the storm breaks."

"Get out both anchors, and we will try and ride it out; but if they fail, we must try and beat out to sea in the teeth of the gale as best we may."

"But we are certainly in desperate danger here."

"We are, indeed, Captain Carl; but hark!"

Out upon the water was heard a hail, and a boat was quickly lowered and dispatched toward the one who hailed.

After a short absence the boat returned, and it bore in it a youth it had taken from the water.

"Well, my bold swimmer, you are a plucky fellow to swim out to us; but give an account of yourself," said Carl Casandra.

"My story is soon told, sir, for I live on yonder shore with my widowed mother."

"Because I opposed her marriage with old Silas Finn, the teacher of the village, he flogged me cruelly, as you can see by the cuts upon my arms and shoulders; and I determined I would not remain in disgrace at home, so swam out to your vessel, to ask for a berth as a cabin boy."

"You can get it; but what is your name?"

"Dare."

"It is suited to you, after your desperate swim; but you are very young."

"Fifteen, sir."

"And do you know this coast?"

"Thoroughly, sir; and you have dropped anchor on the most dangerous part of it, and for that reason I swam out to-night, rather than wait until the morning."

"You are a fine fellow," and Captain Carl gazed with admiration upon the handsome boy, as he stood there, bare-headed and bare-footed, with his shoes, hat and a small bundle hanging at his back.

"You say you can get the schooner out of her danger, my lad?"

"Yes, sir, if her sticks don't go out of her when the blow strikes; but you must get up your anchors and stand ready to set a stitch of canvas, enough to give her good steerage-way, and we'll run out to sea through the channels among the shoals."

"You talk like a commodore, my lad, and if you save the vessel, you will have proven yourself worthy to step into my second luff's shoes, for I need a junior officer greatly."

"But here comes the storm, so take your post, for the schooner is in your hands."

As the pirate captain spoke, the roar of the tempest became appalling, and awe filled the hearts of those who gazed upon its terrific approach over the sea, which it lashed into foam as it came.

Calmly at the wheel stood the boy pilot, and equally as calm was Kate Kenyon, as she stood near the companionway watching the coming of the hurricane.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE LAD AND THE LADY.

WITH a shock that threatened to ride over the stanch schooner, the hurricane came, and for a moment it seemed as though death must come to all and destruction to the vessel; but the Boy Pilot held the head to the sea until the first blow was given, and then letting her fall off, to catch the gale in the few feet of canvas set, let her drive away at a speed that was fearful.

Now and then came a quick, stern order, distinctly heard in spite of the roar of the tempest, for the boy's voice was strangely penetrating, and it was quickly executed.

Further out into the darkness and the storm drove the gallant schooner, and a sigh of relief

came from every heart when it was known that the tempest alone was the danger they had to face, and no longer the dangerous channel among the shoals.

Days passed away, and one night the schooner glided into the lower bay of New York.

It was starlight, and the Sandy Hook light-house cast its eye over the waters, as a beacon for in-coming vessels; but the pirate craft took advantage of it, and running into the harbor, quietly crossed the horseshoe haven, where several vessels were at anchor, and held on under the dark shadows of the Highlands of Navesink.

Here her prow was turned up the Navesink river, and rounding the bold highland promontory, on which now stands beautiful summer-houses, but then was a wilderness, she steered into North Shrewsbury river.

The man at her helm, an old seaman, seemed to know the course full well, for the schooner sped on under a six-knot breeze, keeping close to the Highland shore.

At length the wheel was swung sharply to port, the sails were eased off, and the Spitfire seemed to be going directly into the forest-clad shores.

But no! an opening is seen and into this she darted, to find herself in a secure little harbor, surrounded by overhanging cliffs and trees.

"This is indeed a safe retreat," said the young lad, who had come out to the schooner, and he spoke in a low tone, addressing Kate Kenyon, who was standing near.

Into the mouth of a creek, flowing into the basin, or cove, the schooner came to anchor, and at once all was made shipshape for a continued stay.

"Come, Lennox, the duty that I go on up to the city will require your aid, so you must accompany me," said Captain Carl, after the anchor was let fall.

"But the schooner, sir?" asked the young officer, who did not relish the idea of going for some reason.

"Oh, she'll take care of herself."

"But the prisoners, for the boy is nothing more."

"No, the boy is all right, and I have the pledge of Miss Kenyon that she will not escape while I am gone, and Dare, as the boy calls himself shall be left in charge, for he has shown himself fully capable of commanding, and if he has done well as acting lieutenant, he can do equally well when he is junior officer in reality."

"You take big chances, Captain Carl, in not allowing me to remain in command, for we know not what the crew may do."

"I'll trust to them and the boy, never fear, so come."

"Curses!" muttered the pirate Lieutenant Lennox, and he added:

"He is jealous of me, and feared to leave me alone with her, thinking her beautiful eyes would win me over to setting her free, and I almost fear they would."

"But, if she has given her pledge to him not to escape, she will keep it, but he must have deceived her by some promises to get such a pledge, when she is so anxious to escape," and the lieutenant went to his state-room and soon returned dressed as a merchant sailor, for he had discarded his uniform.

The chief had done likewise, and springing into the gig with the two oarsmen they took their departure, Captain Carl calling out:

"Remember, Dare, to send a boat to-morrow night to the lower village on Staten Island, for the things I intend sending down."

"Let them go to the little white inn and the landlord will give them the packages, as I explained to you."

"Ay ay, sir," called out Dare, and he stood looking at the departing boat.

He allowed all of the crew to turn in for the night, excepting a lookout forward, and said that he would hold the afterpart of the deck until dawn.

Then he paced to and fro, a sad look resting upon his face, as could be seen by the light from the companionway when he passed it.

Sitting in the cabin was Kate Kenyon, and her eyes were fixed upon the boy's face, as he suddenly halted just before the companionway.

"That boy has some strange history, I feel: but I have not dared hardly notice him, for fear I would excite Carl's suspicions."

"His is a face too severe, young as it is, and that he has daring and nerve all on this vessel have been proven, while, in spite of his years he is respected as much as is Lennox, who is less strict than he should be with such a wild crew."

"But then Carl Casandra is severe to the bitterest cruelty."

Stepping to the companionway Kate said softly:

"Dare!"

The boy started, bowed and stepped toward her.

"I would not give you your pirate title of lieutenant, sir, so called you simply Dare."

"It is my name, lady: Duncan Dare," he said in his pleasant way, adding:

"But I did not tell it all to the chief."

"And do you like the sea?"

"Indeed I do, for I was born by its side, down on the shores of Long Island."

"Did you suspect what this vessel was, when you boldly swam out to her to save her from wreck?"

"Oh no, lady; but even had I known her to be a pirate and could have saved her, I would have done so."

"You are a wonderful seaman for one of your years, for I am a good sailor myself, and can judge."

"You lady?"

"Yes, for I too was born by the water, on the shores of the Chesapeake, where I had a lovely home."

"And you came on board this vessel willingly, lady, for you seem not to be treated as a captive?"

"I came willingly yes, for I knew not that he whom I then loved was a pirate."

"You seem kind, and I would tell you my story, would you hear it?"

"Gladly, lady, for I have felt so sad to see you here."

"Then you do not intend to remain?"

The boy shook his head, but said nothing.

"I am so glad, for I feared the offer of rank, even on a pirate craft, might spoil you, and make you belie the look of nobleness and truth on your face."

"No, lady, I came away from home to seek my fortune, and I do not expect it if I remain on this vessel or any other that floats a lawless flag."

"Circumstances made me act as an officer here, and I only do so for a purpose, I frankly confess to you; but not a hand would I raise, or an order give, did Captain Carl attack a vessel while I was on board."

"I am so glad to hear you say so, and now I will tell you all about myself, and perhaps in return you will give me the story of your life."

"What there is to tell, lady, I will gladly make known," was the answer of the lad.

"Will you come down into the cabin?"

"No, lady, I dare not, for I must keep my eyes on the crew, for should they see me enter the cabin, they would at once come here to listen to what we said."

"They are all tricky, and I would not trust one of them."

"Then I will sit here," and Kate Kenyon threw herself down upon the steps, and turned so she could gaze into the handsome face of the boy as she talked to him.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CABIN BOY'S STORY.

"You said that you had left home in disgrace, as it were, and yet I cannot believe that act of yours intentionally could have been wicked," said Kate, in a confiding way, as though to fully win the boy's confidence.

"I will tell you all, lady."

"As I said, my name is Duncan Dare, and my mother comes from a good old Long Island family, half-farmers, half-sailors."

"My father was wrecked on the coast, and a stranger, and my mother saved the lives of those on the wreck, and the result was my father and she learned to love each other."

"What a strange coincidence," murmured Kate, recalling the similar circumstances of her own life.

"My mother was very beautiful, and is yet."

"I can well believe it," thought Kate.

"And she lived most happily with my father, who went to sea as a captain of a vessel, some years after their marriage."

"He never returned, and it was said that his ship foundered with all on board, but somehow I never believed him dead, though I suppose it was because I did not wish to do so."

"Well, another wrecked seaman came to our village, and he was soon made teacher of the little county school."

"The school-house was once a church and parsonage combined, the minister having lived in the rooms above the school hall."

"There is a burying-ground about the school-house, and it is not a cheerful place; but we had no better, and here we children all attended school."

"The Dominie, Silas Finn, was a severe man, and I never liked him, though he treated me kindly."

"He lived alone in the room over the school-room, and kept much to himself."

"At last I found out that he loved my mother and that she, in some way strangely influenced by him, had promised to marry him."

"He spoke to me about it, and I swore that my mother should not become his wife, and the result was he began to bitterly persecute me, as though to show his power over my mother."

"She would not refuse to marry him, although I told her that I believed father yet lived, and she was firm in her intentions to marry him, though the thought of doing so certainly made her appear most unhappy."

"One day Silas Finn determined to whip me, and though I did not raise a hand, he flogged me cruelly as long as he was able to raise his arm."

"It was done before all the school, before one, pretty little Jessie Hampton, my girl sweetheart lady, so that I did not flinch."

"I would have died first, and I have the scars now on my shoulders and back of his cruel blows."

"I did not go right home from school, but remained in the woods until late, and I found that he had been to my mother and told his story."

"I told her mine, and though she believed me she yet said she must marry that man."

"She dressed my cuts for me, and then left me to go to sleep."

"But I got up, and taking the little money I had with me, left home."

"I had seen this schooner lying off on the shoals in the afternoon, and so I determined to swim out to her, and seek my fortune by beginning as a cabin boy."

"When I found out what the schooner was, I of course refused to run her into the inlet, that Captain Carl might rob my friends, perhaps my mother's home, and then, as you know, he threatened to kill me."

"But I would have died before I yielded."

"I knew that, my noble boy, and so I came to your rescue, by showing Carl Casandra that he was destroying his vessel and the lives of all by killing you, for he is merciless, and I believe would have taken your life in his fury."

"As it is, he has made you his cabin boy, and yet you are serving as an officer also."

"He is a strange man, that Carl Casandra, as you will know if you see more of him."

"Now, let me thank you for telling me of yourself, and I hope all will go well for you at home, and that your mother will not marry the schoolmaster, when she finds how deeply you feel about it, while I predict for you that you return home in honor."

"That is my intention, lady, for if I could only go back as a midshipman, gained through my own acts, I would be happy indeed."

"Well, I have some kindred who hold high places in the navy, some relatives of my mother, and I will see what they will do for you, when I return home."

"I prefer to win my promotion, lady, by gallantry; but I thank you most sincerely; but will you not tell me how it is that I find you on this pirate vessel, for you seem so out of place here?"

"Yes, I will tell you my story, now that I have heard yours," and Kate Kenyon told of her home on the shores of the Chesapeake bay, of her twin brother, then at a university in England, of their childhood together, the death of their mother, the traveling abroad and return home to what seemed such a desolate life.

Then her voice became cold and stern as she told of the storm, and how she had gone out in the life-boat with her negro crew, to save the schooner.

All that followed, her admiration, trust and love for Carl Casandra, she made known to the boy, up to the fatal moment of her leaving home, and the agony she felt when she discovered what the vessel was.

"Now," she continued, "Carl Casandra pledged me his word that he would return me by night to my home, if I would promise I would not attempt to escape while the schooner is lying in hiding here."

"And you promised, lady?"

"Yes, I gave him my pledge."

"Do you trust him?"

"No."

"Nor do I."

"Well, I will never marry him."

"See! I carry this weapon, which I found in the cabin, and before I would marry him I would drive it to his heart," and the look in Kate Kenyon's eyes as she uttered the words

proved that she meant all that she said, and she returned the jeweled dagger to her bosom once more.

"Now let us be friends, and, as we know each other, we can work together to foil this man, Carl Casandra," and Kate held up her hand and the Cabin Boy firmly grasped it.

Thus was a firm compact entered into between the two, so strangely met in the cabin of the pirate vessel, and from that moment the boy and the maiden plotted mischief against Carl Casandra the Corsair.

CHAPTER XX.

ON THE CABIN BOY'S TRACK.

THE next day, according to Captain Carl's orders, the Cabin Boy, acting as an officer, sent a boat with a coxswain and four oarsmen up to Staten Island for certain stores and articles needed for the schooner.

The remainder of the crew were set to work repairing and overhauling the vessel, and the day passed in a busy way.

On the return of the boat the coxswain reported secretly to the lad that a very inquisitive man, who had discovered the existence of the Spitfire in those waters, had been making inquiries regarding whether they had not been cruising on the Long Island shore of the Atlantic, and if there was not on the vessel a youth answering his, Dare's, description.

"He seemed to know so much," continued the coxswain, "that I invited him into the boat to go down and see for himself, thinking it best to hold him for the captain, who will either make him ship as one of the crew, or put an end to him."

Dare, the Cabin Boy, was considerably moved by what he heard, for he did not doubt but that it was some one in search of him.

Did he make himself known then, as being on a pirate vessel, it would kill his mother he felt, if it got to her ears.

He therefore was determined not to be recognized by the visitor, and yet he wished to see him, for he knew if he remained on board Captain Carl would do with him as the coxswain had said.

He made known to Kate Kenyon the situation of affairs, and she promptly said:

"If the man means you no harm, is only seeking to find you, the sooner you get him away from the schooner the better, for Carl would rather kill him than have him go."

"But I do not wish to be recognized, lady."

"True. Oh! here is a mask I found among the traps on board, so put it on, and throw this cloak about you."

"There, that is splendid."

"Now I will tell the coxswain to send the man here."

In a short while the stranger entered.

He was a frank-faced, fearless-looking man, looking like one who was half-landsman, half-sailor, and he seemed surprised when ushered into the cabin.

He glanced from the lady to the youth, and then turned to the coxswain but he had gone, and his eyes came back to the masked face and cloaked form.

"Well, my man, what do you wish on board this craft?" said Dare in a voice of assumed sternness.

"I came in search of a runaway lad, sir, and I am an officer of the law."

"You have come into the wrong place, my man, and if you value your life you will at once depart, for this vessel is the buccaneer Spitfire, and you had better just slip quietly over the stern and get ashore as best you can, for if you await the return of her captain you will be swung up to the yard-arm."

The man paled a little, but showed no fear, and seemed about to argue the matter; but the masked Cabin Boy said:

"Now be off, while there is time to save your life."

"Gently slip over the taffrail and swim for the shore, and none of the crew will see you in the darkness. Do you understand?"

"I do, and I thank you, whoever you are," and the man turned quickly, bowed to Kate, and disappeared noiselessly over the schooner's stern.

When he had departed the Cabin Boy said quietly, as he removed the mask and cloak.

"That man is Constable Nat Kane from my village, and he was indeed on my track."

"Now to deceive the crew."

Seizing a musket Dare went to the companionway, glanced cautiously up and down the deck, and seeing that no one of the crew was near hurled it into the sea.

It fell with a loud splash, and then rung out the words:

"Ho, men! man overboard!"

"The prisoner has escaped, for he went up the companionway and over the stern into the sea."

All was at once excitement, and a boat was launched and pulled rapidly about the little harbor.

But the darkness prevented those on the vessel from seeing what had become of the fugitive.

"It will not do to remain here now, for we will be discovered, so I will go to the other rendezvous, the captain appointed, should we have to depart from here, and there he will join us."

"Order two men to run up in a boat to Staten Island, and wait the captain's coming to the White Tavern, so he can come direct to the rendezvous."

The schooner was in bad shape for moving, for she was, as I have said, undergoing repairs; but did she remain where she was Dare knew well enough that she would be taken, did the constable go to the city and report her presence, as he did not doubt that he would do.

Why a constable had been sent after him, he could not tell, but he set it down to some of Silas Finn's work, little knowing that the schoolmaster was in his grave, having been killed, as the reader will remember by Carl Casandra, who had kept the act from his crew through some reason or other.

If the vessel was taken both he and Kate Kenyon would be found on board, and this Dare the Cabin Boy by no means wished to be the case.

Also, by running off to save the schooner, he would gain the confidence of Captain Carl, and thus open the way for his future efforts to escape, and at the same time aid Kate Kenyon.

Thus it was that he called the Sandy Hook pilot, who was one of the crew, to take the wheel, and the schooner moved slowly out of her secret retreat.

Down the Shrewsbury river she went, through the waters of Navesink, around the Hook, and out to sea.

Then she headed down the coast, keeping close inshore and coming to Manasquan Inlet, just before dawn, ran boldly into it.

A league away was a heavily wooded island, and in a cove in its heavily wooded shores, she found the anchorage which Carl Casandra had directed her to.

When the sun arose she was safely hidden away, the Jersey farmers not far distant little dreaming that a pirate vessel was so near their hearthstones.

With farm-houses not more than a mile distant, the repairing of the schooner could not be kept up, for fear sharp ears would catch the sounds, so after setting a watch out on the island, Carl Casandra sought the rest he so much needed, and the vessel, whose decks had been so often stained with blood, became as still as the grave.

CHAPTER XXI.

AT THE POINT OF THE SWORD.

THE day passed away without an incident, but some hours after dark one of the lookouts on the island reported a small vessel standing up the Manasquan toward the island.

Going ashore, for the schooner lay against the bank, the water being of good depth, the Cabin Boy turned his glass upon the approaching craft.

"She is too large to belong to any of the farms, and it must be Captain Carl coming, or a message from him."

"I will soon know, for I shall display the signal."

"Bring me a red and green lantern."

Dare's order was promptly obeyed, and when he held the lanterns above his head, one in each hand, he saw an answering signal from the sloop, which displayed a blue and white light.

"The signals are correct; but then traitors are numerous, and we must be ready for friend or foe," and Dare called the men on board and got ready for action, though he had no intention of resisting, only being anxious to appear well with the men.

In a short while the coming sloop rounded the island and shot into the cove.

"Sloop ahoy!" hailed the Cabin Boy.

"Ahoy the Spitfire!"

"Ay, ay, sir!" called out the lad, recognizing the voice of Captain Carl.

Taking in sail, the sloop glided quietly alongside of the schooner, and Captain Carl sprung upon the cutter's deck, followed by Lennox,

while a score of men were visible upon the other vessel.

"Well, my gallant Cabin Boy, you did well to get out of the Navesink waters, for our presence was known there, and we must depart from here too, as soon as I have gotten the cargo on the sloop transferred to the Spitfire.

"Set the men to work, Lennox, and let them lose no time, for we must have both vessels two leagues at sea, and far apart when dawn comes.

"Ah, Kate, my beautiful, you have not yet retired?" and he turned to the maiden.

"No, I waited up to see if you brought any tidings for me?"

"Yes, I went to the post-office, for somehow I had an idea that your father would write to you to every seaport, urging your return, and I wished to be sure if he would welcome you as my wife."

"Well, did you get a letter?"

"Yes, and read it, and it begs you to come back to him and he will forgive all, so you see he will forgive me too, if he does not know me as a pirate, and of course we will not tell him."

"Wretch inhuman, give me my letter!"

"Here it is, and kindly read it by the binnacle light, as I wish to see this lad alone in the cabin.

"Come, sir!" and Captain Carl called to Dare, who quietly followed him.

"Be seated, my lad, and I will join you soon," and the captain left the cabin; but in a few minutes he returned and sat down, his face wearing a look of deviltry.

He was flushed with drinking, Dare at once observed, and he seemed in no very pleasant mood.

But the youth sat in calm silence awaiting the pirate's will.

"Well, my boy, you have proven yourself a good commander, and I suppose are willing to cast your lot with us, when I promise you that you shall be my junior luff?"

"I came out, sir, to be a sailor, and though I did not expect to turn pirate, the force of circumstances seems to have led me that way," was the cautious answer.

"Well, your high notions of honor will soon be blunted as mine were, and then you'll be as wicked as I can be when I please."

"But let me say now that, finding our presence in New York waters was known, I left the city with but half the needed articles for putting the schooner in shape, and I shall have to sail for the Chesapeake, hide in some inlet, and run to Baltimore for what is needed, so we will depart to-night; but did all go well while I was away?"

"Yes, sir."

"The crew did not show ill will at my leaving you in charge?"

"No, sir."

"Nothing of moment happened?"

"Yes, sir, the coxswain brought a man back in the boat with him, from Staten Island, and he proved to be a constable, on my track."

"I did not wish to be recognized by him, as being on a pirate vessel, so put on a mask and cloak the lady gave me, and had him taken to the cabin."

"Finding out that the schooner was a pirate, he went up the companionway and over the stern, and all effort to capture him was fruitless."

"You have told a straight story, my lad, for I heard this from the men who came to tell me you had departed for this rendezvous."

"Now tell me what you think of the fair Kate?"

"The lady, sir?"

"Yes."

"She is very lovely, sir."

"I know that; but does she seem to fret much?"

"She came with you willingly, sir, did she not?" innocently asked Dare.

"Oh, yes; but I was afraid she fretted at being on board ship."

"She told me that you had won her love, and you were to be married."

"Oh, the sly minx! she is fooling me after all and really wishes to remain with me, only is anxious to make me give up my piratical life," said Captain Carl, a pleasant look upon his face.

"Now, my lad, there is another thing."

"Yes, sir."

"You remember that I went to the Long Island coast, where you joined us, for a purpose?"

"So you said, sir."

"That purpose was to find a buried treasure, and if I failed in that, to take a look into some of the rich old farm-houses, there, where I have learned there is a great deal of silver plate."

"I was thwarted by the storm last time, and

your persisting in not running me into the inlet, and now, as soon as I have gone to the Chesapeake and fitted out, I will return there.

"It is my intention to go into the inlet by night, and make a thorough search for this treasure, for I have information that I believe will lead to its discovery and you must be my pilot."

"No sir, I cannot do that."

"But you must."

"I cannot lead you against my own home and people."

"I say you shall."

"No, Captain Carl."

"Boy, I shall make you my junior officer, and if I get the treasure, you shall have a share equal to my own."

"No, Captain Carl, I will not do it."

"Boy, if you refuse me, I will kill you."

"I will die before I betray my own people, sir."

"By Heaven you shall die then."

"Here, stand there against that mast."

The youth stepped to the mast, and stood with his back against it.

Going behind him, Captain Carl seized his hands and quickly pinioned him to the mast.

"Now boy, your minute of doom has come, unless you do as I demand!" announced the captain of the Spitfire.

"I am ready to meet death, rather than to do as you demand, sir," was the bold response.

The pirate slowly drew his pistol, meanwhile looking the boy firmly in the face, and calmly seated himself at the table with his watch in his hand.

"Now, my gallant Cabin Boy, disobedience on this vessel means death, and you have but one minute to live," and Captain Carl the Corsair gazed with sneering face straight into the fearless eyes that met his own without quivering.

"Will you obey?" asked the pirate, glancing at his watch.

"Never, sir, will I do what you ask," was the reply, in a firm voice.

"Curses on you, boy, you have won a victory over me, for I will not kill you, as you will be useful to me."

"There, you are free, and I will get another to serve as pilot into the inlet I seek."

"Now go on deck and help get the schooner out of this as quickly as possible."

"I thank you, Captain Carl," said the boy, his face flushing with joy as he got out of his perilous situation and the pirate released him.

"No thanks; go on deck," was the gruff reply.

Out of the cabin the boy went, and as he reached the deck he beheld Kate Kenyon standing there in the light of the companionway.

She was as white as a corpse, and in her right hand she grasped a pistol.

"I have seen and heard all, my noble boy, and I would have shot him dead ere he could have sent a bullet into your heart," and Kate Kenyon fairly hissed the words, in her hatred for the pirate chief.

"Bless you, beautiful lady," said Dare, and he added quickly:

"Put up your pistol and pretend to be friendly with Captain Carl, for I have a motive in asking it."

Then Dare bounded forward to aid the crew, and half an hour after the schooner and the sloop sailed out of the Manasquan, the latter heading for New York, the Spitfire turning her prow toward the secret inlet in Chesapeake Bay.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CABIN BOY'S PLOT.

THE inlet that the Spitfire ran into was one that was certainly most secluded, and the approach to it was such that no one would suspect that other than a yawl could get into the deep harbor where the pirate craft dropped anchor.

The shores of the little haven were wild and heavily wooded, the trees towering above the masts of the schooner, and the place was most dismal by day even, for no habitation was within leagues.

It was just the place for a retreat for the pirates' craft, for no ears were near to hear the sound of carpenter work, and thither no one but an outlaw would care to go.

In running up the bay the schooner had overhauled and captured a small fishing-smack, and putting her crew of five men in irons, Captain Carl had taken the little craft in tow.

Once in the secret retreat he set the men to work, and again ordering Lennox to accompany him, he started to the city for what things were needed for the schooner's repairs.

He had faith in his lieutenant as an officer,

but he felt that he had become deeply interested in Kate Kenyon, and he feared to leave Lennox to her entreaties, for he dreaded that he would allow her to escape.

Kate, however, had pretended some friendliness, and the seed sown by the Cabin Boy, that she really loved him, but was playing a part, Captain Carl began to believe.

"She will not escape," he said; "but I will see to it that she does not," he added.

His seeing to it meant going around among the crew and bribing one man to be a spy over Kate, another on the Cabin Boy, and then placing other spies upon the acts of his hirelings.

Thus he departed in the smack, with Lennox and two men, and he felt safe in his mind regarding both the Cabin Boy and Kate.

Dare was again left in charge, and all promised well in the mind of Captain Carl for finding the craft in good trim, and all safe upon his return.

The very night following his departure, Duncan Dare determined to act, for he knew that delays were dangerous.

Taking the gig, and a fowling-piece, accompanied by a couple of seamen, he rowed ashore to shoot some game.

It was late in the afternoon when he returned, and he had plenty of game with him, which he gave mostly to the crew, to their great delight.

He had not ordered the gig swung up to the davits again for the night, and the men cared for no extra work, so it remained at the starboard gangway aft.

As night came on the air became damp and chilly, the forest insects and toads began their songs, and the place was dismal, indeed.

The basin was several acres in size, and the schooner was anchored near the center of it; but the tall trees around the banks made it very dark and forbidding.

Fastening several hooks to lines, and knotting them together, Duncan Dare walked quietly along the starboard side, and dropped them over into the little gig.

Then he walked aft, and shivering, as though with a chill, he ordered the boatswain to issue grog all around, for he said:

"I fear this place will make us all sick, and below decks is the best place for us."

Back along the port side he walked, as though for exercise, and stopping at the stern, he caught hold of a string that was fast to the taffrail.

"It is fast, the hooks have caught," he muttered, and dropping the line he again went slowly along the starboard side.

Hesitating an instant at the gangway, he quickly unfastened the gig's painter, and let it drop into the water.

Again he walked aft, and pulling on the string, soon drew the gig directly under the shelving stern of the schooner.

Then he went down the companionway and said, in a low tone:

"The gig is directly under the starboard stern port, so you can readily get into it."

"It is fast only by a string, so be careful."

"Take scoops to put in the row-locks, and then go to the spot I directed you to-night."

"And you?" asked Kate Kenyon anxiously.

"I will follow you."

"It is a fearful place to swim in, this black pool," she said with a shudder.

"I will make it all right, and if you will take the cloak I'll soon get warm."

"I will take all that we need, and leave at once."

"Warn me, if any one comes aft."

"I will," and Dare began to pace up and down the deck again, from stem to stern, walking rapidly, stamping his feet, and slapping his arms about his body, to make as much noise as possible to cover up any sound that might come from Kate's getting into the boat.

After awhile he walked aft and quickly glanced over the stern.

The gig was not there. Then he closed the companionway doors, to shut off the light, and once more walked forward.

The greater number of the crew were below, but the watch was on deck, huddled up in the forecastle, one on the lookout, and the remainder gathered about a lantern gambling with cards.

"A bad place this anchorage, lads, and I don't care how soon the captain comes back and gets us out of it," said the young officer, and the men agreed with him, while one said:

"Fighting is better than this kind of resting, sir."

Duncan Dare laughed and again walked aft.

Then he bent over, seized a rope and lowered himself quickly and silently into the water.

In a noiseless way he swam shoreward, and once the length of the schooner away, he struck out with a bold, strong stroke.

The water was very cold, and he was retarded by his clothes, but he was a bold, swimmer, and soon came to the land.

As he touched the shore a voice said:

"Thank God!"

It was Kate Kenyon, and she sat in the gig, her hand upon the oars.

"I have muffled them well, and you must put this cloak about you," she said, as he stepped into the boat.

"No, for rowing will warm me up, lady," and Duncan Dare seized the oars and the boat was sent along the shore at a rapid pace.

Once out of the inlet, and the Cabin Boy waded along the bay shore, and, after rowing a couple of leagues landed where there was a light visible showing a habitation.

It was the home of an humble fisherman, and his smack lay at anchor near, so that a bargain was soon made with him to run the fugitives to Castle Kenyon, some leagues down the coast.

It was after sunrise when the smack put into the little haven of Castle Kenyon, and Kate beheld her father standing upon the pier, for he had seen her coming.

A look of joy was upon his white, haggard face, and he folded her in his arms in glad welcome.

In a few words Kate told him all, after she had presented him to the daring Cabin Boy, and then Duncan Dare said:

"And now, sir, I must beg a horse from you to ride to Baltimore, that I may warn some war-vessel there and pilot it down to capture the Spitfire."

"I will drive there with you, my brave boy," said the planter.

"No, sir, it is best that you remain, for Miss Kate needs your care now, and I can go faster on horseback."

And an hour after Duncan Dare was on his way to Baltimore mounted on a fleet horse, and anxious to get there in time to have a war-vessel capture the schooner before she could escape.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CABIN BOY'S LUCK.

In good time Duncan Dare reached Baltimore, and found there a brig-of-war, and to her captain told his story.

The brig was unfortunately undergoing repairs and she could not be gotten ready until the next day, and then she set sail for the secret retreat, Duncan Dare going on board.

Just as they came in sight of the secret inlet, as the dawn was breaking, the schooner was suddenly seen to shoot out into the open bay under a cloud of canvas.

Instantly the men were called to quarters, a hot fire was opened upon the schooner, and an exciting chase was begun.

But the distance was too great for the guns to do much damage, and the shots fell short, while the Spitfire steadily gained upon her pursuer, and swept out into the ocean leagues ahead of her.

Returning to port, where he saw his chase was useless, to continue his repairs to the brig, the captain took Duncan Dare with him to Washington to make his report, and also to let the lad tell what he had discovered from papers he saw in the Spitfire's cabin, that it was the intention of the pirate to make a search for treasure upon the Long Island coast, and, if unsuccessful, to raid the homes of the rich farmers for booty.

The naval secretary was very much pleased with the handsome, daring youth, and obtained for him, at once a midshipman's warrant, at the same time ordering him to New York in all haste, with letters to the commander of every cruiser he might find there, to give him aid in the capture of the pirate and his crew.

Thus armed with authority, Duncan Dare went on his way, and knowing at what time Captain Carl had contemplated his raid, he arranged accordingly to meet him with a land force, and at the same time run into the inlet on a small coaster, but with a good force of Government tars, and capture the Spitfire at her anchorage.

To make it a success he wrote a long letter to Constable Nat Kane, telling him to secretly organize a band of brave men, and be ready to act.

When Captain Carl went back to his vessel, and found that Kate and the Cabin Boy had

outwitted him and escaped, he was wild with rage, and the heads of his spies would have fallen, had not a messenger come from the city, warning him that he had been betrayed and a brig-of-war was then in search of him.

Quickly he put to sea, and just in time, as the reader has seen.

On his trip to Baltimore he discovered, to his horror, that Marks had mysteriously disappeared, and along with him the profits of all the Spitfire's piracy, and he was left penniless.

"Heads shall fall for this, and my revenge shall be terrible on Marks, that woman, and that accursed Cabin Boy," he almost shouted in his wild rage.

As he was left poor, he determined to first seek the Long Island buried treasure, and believing that Duncan Dare had returned to his home, he meant to capture him too.

So he arranged for his midnight marauding expedition, secured a coast pilot, ran into the inlet, landed his force, and an hour after had been surprised, defeated, his vessel taken, and all by the Cabin Boy upon whom he sought revenge.

Hastily the slain pirates were buried that night, where they fell, and it was not known whether Captain Carl was among them or not, but many asserted that they had seen him fall, and he was considered to have thus cheated the gallows.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

WHEN Duncan Dare returned to his home, he was not long in discovering why Nat Kane the constable had been on his track, for Captain Carl having killed old Silas Finn that night that he disappeared, he was considered the schoolmaster's murderer.

Recognizing the boy by a ring he wore, Constable Kane, knowing that he owed him his life, kept his secret, though bemoaning his fall from honor, and he was wild with joy when Duncan Dare's letter told him why he was a pirate, and he gladly entered into the boy's plans to capture the pirates.

The meeting between widow Dare and her brave boy, the welcome he received from his girl lady-love, Jessie Hampton, I must pass over; but certain it is, that all who knew Duncan Dare in after years were proud to claim his friendship, and along the Long Island coast many stories are told to-day of the landing of Captain Carl the Corsair, and the luck that it brought the gallant Cabin Boy.

THE END.

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